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CONTENTS

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

15 December Middle East and South Asia Review 1

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Palestinian Affairs

Reportage on 'Arafat Geneva News Conference 3
Radio Monte Carlo Report 3
Renounces Terrorism *[Radio Monte Carlo]* 3
Accepts Resolutions 242, 338 *[Radio Free Lebanon]* 3
Paper Cites Attempt on 'Arafat's Life in Geneva *[Amman AKHBAR AL-USBU' 15 Dec]* 4
Yasir 'Arafat Departs Geneva for GDR 15 Dec *[INA]* 4
PLO Spokesman: U.S. Decision 'Turning Point' *[Cairo Radio]* 4
PFLP's Habash Welcomes U.S. Decision *[KUNA]* 4
PNC Chairman Welcomes Decision on Dialogue *[Radio Free Lebanon]* 5
Palestinians in Syria Score 'Arafat Speech *[Voice of National Resistance]* 5

ARAB AFRICA

Algeria

Bendjedid Chairs FLN Central Committee Session *[Algiers Radio]* 6
Leading Officials Elected *[Algiers TV]* 7
FLN Central Committee Statement *[Algiers Radio]* 7

Egypt

Mubarak Comments on 'Arafat UN Speech *[MENA]* 8
Telephones Shultz *[MENA]* 9
Sends Messages to Reagan, Shultz *[MENA]* 9
Al-Baz: Decision To Improve Ties With Arabs *[Cairo Radio]* 9
Foreign Ministry: Decision 'Significant' Step *[MENA]* 10
'Abd al-Majid Welcomes U.S. Call for Dialogue *[MENA]* 10
Papers Comment on 'Historic' 'Arafat Speech *[MENA]* 10
USSR Envoy in Cairo Discusses 'Arafat Speech *[MENA]* 10
Mubarak Meets Thai Prince, Italian Delegation *[Cairo Radio]* 11
Thai Prince Ends Official Visit, Departs *[MENA]* 11
Italian Senate Delegation Concludes Visit *[MENA]* 11
Oil Prices Fixed for Remainder of December *[MENA]* 11

Libya

'Masses' Demonstrate Over Recognition of Israel *[Tripoli Radio]* 11
Minutes on Cooperation With Algeria Signed *[Tripoli Radio]* 12

Sudan

Al-Mahdi on New Western Border Security Plan *[Omdurman Radio]* 12
Al-Mahdi Proposes Constitutional Conference *[SUNA]* 12
Opposition Leader Comments on Need To Halt War
[London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 10 Dec] 13
SPLA Expresses Surprise Over News on Meeting *[Radio SPLA]* 13

Alliance Praises SPLM-SPLA-DUP Meeting *[Radio SPLA]* 13
SUNA: Coup Attempted, Foiled 'Last Week' 14
State Council Member Holds News Conference *[SUNA]* 14
General on 'Intensive Action' Against Rebels *[SUNA]* 14
NIF Warns Government on Islamic Laws *[SUNA]* 14
'Residential Representation' in PDRY *[SUNA]* 15

Tunisia

Yasir 'Arafat Statement on Talks With Ben Ali *[Tunis Radio]* 15
'Results' of Commission Meeting With Libya *[TAP]* 15

ARABIAN PENINSULA

Kuwait

Foreign Minister, Iran's Lavasani Hold Talks *[KUNA]* 17
Defense Minister: Gulf States Want Mines Cleared *[ARAB TIMES 13 Dec]* 17

Oman

'Legal Recognition' of Palestinian State Declared *[WAKH]* 17
Sultan Qabus Returns From Saudi Arabia, UAE *[WAKH]* 17
Iraq's Ramadan Meets Sultan Qabus, Departs *[Muscat Radio]* 17

Qatar

'Responsible Source' Welcomes 'Arafat UN Speech *[WAKH]* 18

Saudi Arabia

Syrian President Resumes Talks With King Fahd *[Damascus Radio]* 18
Departs After Talks *[Riyadh Radio]* 18
Afghan Mujahidin Leader Thanks King Fahd *[Riyadh Radio]* 18

United Arab Emirates

Sea Mine Explosion Wounds Fishermen 14 Dec *[WAKH]* 19

Yemen Arab Republic

Al-Iryani Addresses UN General Assembly *[Sanaa Radio]* 19
President Appoints New Minister of State *[Sanaa Radio]* 19

IRAQ

Tariq 'Aziz Meets With 'Arafat, Al-Masri, Klibi *[INA]* 20
Meets With Perez de Cuellar *[INA]* 20
'Aziz Calls for 'Normal' PLO-U.S. Ties *[KUNA]* 20
Ramadan Meets U.S. Congressional Delegation *[INA]* 20
Oil Minister Announces Decision To Cut Exports *[INA]* 20
Makes Statement to London Paper *[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 8 Dec]* 21
Reportage on Visit of Brazilian Commerce Minister 21
Arrives 10 Dec *[INA]* 21
Attends Joint Committee Meetings *[Baghdad Radio]* 21
Meets With Industry Minister *[INA]* 22
Conveys Message to President *[INA]* 22
Discusses Ties With Hammadi *[Baghdad Radio]* 22
Confers With Ramadan *[INA]* 22

Sudanese Armed Forces Commander Arrives 13 Dec *[INA]* 22
Meets With Khayrallah *[INA]* 22
Transport Minister Leaves for Cairo Meetings *[INA]* 22
AL-JUMHURIYAH Cited on Executions in Iran *[INA]* 23

ISRAEL

Reaction to U.S. Decision on PLO Dialogue 24
Shamir's Office States 'Regret' *[Jerusalem Radio]* 24
Shamir 'Disappointed' *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 24
Foreign Ministry Reacts *[Jerusalem Radio]* 24
May Seek U.S. Clarifications *[Jerusalem Radio]* 24
Ambassador Arad, MK's Comment *[Jerusalem Radio]* 24
Peres: 'Not a Happy Ending' *[Jerusalem Radio]* 25
Arens: No 'Substantive' Change *[Jerusalem Radio]* 26
UN Ambassador Bein Comments *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 26
Party Leaders, MK's React *[Jerusalem Radio]* 27
Further Response of Parties *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 28
Call for Coalition Reassessment *[Jerusalem Radio]* 28
Arabs Take 'Positive' View *[Jerusalem Radio]* 28
Sinyurah: 'Uprising' To Continue *[Jerusalem Radio]* 29
'Elation' Over U.S. Decision *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 29
Peres Addresses Knesset on 'Arafat Speech *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 29
Peres Holds News Conference on PLO, U.S. Ties *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 32
Likud-Alignment Meeting Ends; No Agreement Made *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 32
Peres 'Willing' To Accept Finance Portfolio *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 33
Jerusalem 'Knows Nothing' About Kissinger Mission *[HATZOFE 15 Dec]* 33
Soviets 'More Sympathetic' to Direct Flights *[THE JERUSALEM POST 15 Dec]* 33
Kalmanovich Convicted of Espionage, Gets 9 Years *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 33
Booby-Trapped Parcel Sent to Lisbon Embassy *[Jerusalem Radio]* 34
Three Gazans Deported to Lebanon 14 Dec *[Tel Aviv Radio]* 34
Palestinian Census, Passports, ID Cards Planned *[HADASHOT 15 Dec]* 34
2 Wounded on West Bank; Other Incidents Noted *[Jerusalem Radio]* 34

JORDAN

King Husayn Meets Mitterrand, Makes Statement *[Amman Radio]* 35
Reportage on Visit by King Husayn to France *[cross-reference]* 35
Foreign Minister Comments on 'Arafat Speech *[Radio Monte Carlo]* 35
Police Link Counterfeit Cases to Exchange Rate *[JORDAN TIMES 13 Dec]* 36
AL-SIYASAH on King's 'Reconciliation' Efforts *[13 Dec]* 36
AL-RA'Y on King's Efforts for Arab 'Entity' *[10 Dec]* 37

LEBANON

Al-Huss on U.S. Security Council Resolution Veto *[Beirut Radio]* 38
Israel's Expulsion of Palestinians Protested *[Beirut Radio]* 38
Syrians Said Moving SAM Missiles to New Sites *[VOL]* 38
Paqraduni Discusses Elections, Syria's Role *[Kuwait AL-ANBA' 12 Dec]* 38
Army Denies Hindering Travel at Crossing *[Beirut Radio]* 40
Hizballah Claims Attack From E. Beirut Repulsed *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 40
Hizballah Denies 'Promise' To Turn Over Assassins *[Voice of the Oppressed]* 40

SYRIA

Al-Asad Returns From Talks in Saudi Arabia *[Damascus Radio]* 41
Talks Have 'Positive Results' *[Radio Monte Carlo]* 41
AL-BA'TH Cited on Meeting *[Damascus Radio]* 42
Reportage on Visit of USSR's Rafik Nishanov 42
Attends Talks 12 Dec *[Damascus Radio]* 42
Holds News Conference *[Damascus Radio]* 42
Confers With Al-Shar' *[SANA]* 43
Departs Following Visit *[Damascus Radio]* 43

Kurdish Party Leader Meets With Officials 43
Visits Ba'th Party Official *[Damascus TV]* 43
Holds Talks With Qaddurah *[Damascus Radio]* 43
Meets Information Minister *[Damascus Radio]* 43

SOUTH ASIA

Afghanistan

Najibullah on 'Demilitarization,' 'Neutrality' *[Paris L'HUMANITE 6 Dec]* 44
Mujahidin Leader Comments on Al-Ta'if Talks *['UKAZ 10 Dec]* 45
Mujahidin Coalition To Adopt Common Emblem, Name *[Tehran Radio]* 47
Iranian 'Spy' Answers Questions on Activities *[Kabul Radio]* 47
Military Carries Out Operations in Various Provinces *[BAKHTAR]* 47
Protest Note No 149 Submitted to UN Mission *[BAKHTAR]* 47
Plane Carrying Relief Supplies Leaves for Armenia *[BAKHTAR]* 48

Bangladesh

Delhi: Opposition Leader Demands Free, Fair Polls 48

Iran

Mohtashami on Conditions for Party Activity *[Tehran Radio]* 48
Majles Deputies Discuss Constitutional Reform *[IRNA]* 49
Lavasani Addresses UN on Palestinian Rights *[Tehran Radio]* 49
Velayati Departs on 3-Day Visit to PRC *[IRNA]* 50
Khamene'i Ends Visit to Fars Province *[Tehran TV]* 50

Pakistan

President Ishaq Khan Addresses Parliament 14 Dec *[Islamabad Radio]* 50
Baluchistan Assembly Dissolved by Governor *[Islamabad International]* 56
Bhutto Will Not Intervene *[Islamabad International]* 56
Bhutto Addresses Parliament *[Islamabad Radio]* 57

Sri Lanka

LTTE Urges Boycott of Presidential Election *[AFP]* 57

15 December Middle East and South Asia Review

LD1512133888 [Editorial Report]

Reaction to U.S. Decision on PLO

PLO spokesman Ahmad 'Abd al-Rahman viewed the U.S. decision to begin a dialogue with the PLO as a "historic turning point," adding that the PLO leadership will form a delegation to start talks with the U.S. ambassador in Tunis next week, Cairo radio reported.

Secretary of State George Shultz' announcement followed PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's declaration that all parties to the Middle East dispute have the right to live in peace and security, including the Palestinian state and Israel.

Speaking at a Geneva press conference reported by Radio Monte Carlo, 'Arafat also stated that the PLO renounces "all" forms of terrorism, including individual, group, and state terrorism.

Nevertheless, he made it clear that neither he nor anyone else can stop the Palestinian "uprising" in the occupied territories.

The PLO leader stressed that peace is a "strategy" not a tactic and he confirmed the PLO accepts UN Resolutions 242 and 338 as a basis for negotiations with Israel within the framework of an international conference.

The U.S. announcement also followed a telephone conversation between Shultz and Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, who urged the United States to assume a "more understanding and positive stand" regarding the "constructive" moves made by the PLO, according to MENA.

An Egyptian Foreign Ministry source subsequently welcomed the U.S. decision as "significant" and "positive," adding Egypt played a "major role" in it, the agency noted.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's office expressed "regret" over the U.S. decision and warned it will not bring peace, Jerusalem radio reported.

Shamir's office is considering sending an envoy to Washington to obtain clarifications and voice the prime minister's objection to the U.S. decision, the radio added.

Likud minister Moshe Arens stated in an interview with the radio that the change in U.S. policy is "negative" but will not cause a substantive change in U.S.-Israeli relations.

An Israeli Foreign Ministry statement cited by the radio contended that the U.S. Administration attaches too much importance to PLO "rhetoric," adding that the PLO's "verbiage" is accompanied by the demand for an independent Palestinian state, which is a "threat" to Israeli security.

Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres told the radio that this "very serious change" in U.S. policy marks a "sad day" for Israel and added Israel must respond to the new situation with a political initiative of its own.

Warning Israel will find itself under "heavy political blockade" if it fails to come out with a convincing initiative, Peres said Israel must seek an alternative to the PLO by encouraging the emergence of an elected leadership in the territories.

Regarding the effect of this on the formation of the new Israeli Government, Peres stressed the Labor Party will not be party to a coalition that aims at preserving the status quo in the territories.

Referring to the Likud's previous opposition to his 1987 agreement with Jordan's King Husayn, Peres said it is now clear that "pushing Jordan out of the picture was a fatal mistake" that paved the way for the PLO.

As for the PLO's renunciation of terrorism, Peres contended that "any Molotov cocktail thrown in the territories today annuls that entire commitment."

Peres had earlier described 'Arafat's UN General Assembly speech as "at best a rhetorical success and in the least a political failure."

Addressing the Knesset in a speech carried by IDF radio, Peres stated that 'Arafat's condemnations of terrorism have left the door open to violent acts in the territories, adding that "what is important is not what 'Arafat says but whether he shoots."

Peres also maintained there is a "historic" difference between UN Resolutions 181 and 242, and the two resolutions cannot be combined as 242 "replaces" 181 and is not an addendum to it.

Residents in the territories welcomed Shultz' announcement with "elation" and called off a planned general strike in the Gaza Strip, IDF radio reported.

The Israeli authorities had earlier deported three Gaza residents to Lebanon, the radio noted.

Syria

President Hafiz al-Asad left Riyadh after 2 days of talks with Saudi King Fahd and other officials, Damascus television reported.

The meetings achieved "positive results," Radio Monte Carlo reported, particularly regarding improved relations between Syria and Egypt and Egypt's return to the Arab League.

An AL-BA'TH editorial said Al-Asad's visit indicated Syria's desire to overcome "sideline differences and narrow interests," Damascus radio reported.

According to the Kuwaiti paper AL-SIYASAH, Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam recently informed King Husayn that Al-Asad is willing to meet Egyptian President Husni Mubarak in Jordan whenever preparations for such a summit are completed.

The paper said he is also willing to cooperate with Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and the Yemens within the framework of an Arab grouping for the countries east of the Mediterranean.

Gulf Mine Explosion

Four Indian fishermen were wounded when their boat hit a mine in waters east of the UAE town of Ra's al-Khaymah, WAKH reported.

Two of the fishermen are in critical condition.

Iraq

Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz met with UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar in Geneva to affirm Iraq's desire to achieve peace with Iran, INA reported.

'Aziz reiterated remarks he made in a message to Perez de Cuellar accusing Iran of hindering the peace process with its "ambiguous" stand and continued calls for mobilization.

Iran

Internal Political Situation—Interior Minister 'Ali Akbar Mohtashemi announced that political parties conforming to the criteria laid out in the Constitution and laws passed in September 1981 will now be able to operate freely, Tehran radio reported.

The parties must be formed on the basis of Islamic, national, and revolutionary interests and pursue the objective of rebuilding society.

The Tudeh Party Central Committee Politburo issued a statement broadcast on the clandestine Radio of the Iranian Toilers condemning the Khomyni regime for "the mass murder" of its members and other political prisoners, adding that the mass murders are still going on.

Foreign Relations—Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati held talks in Beijing with his Chinese counterpart Qian Qichen, Tehran radio reported.

Qian termed cooperation between the two countries "fruitful" and expressed support for the UN secretary general's four-point plan to implement Resolution 598.

Pakistan

In a 14 December address to parliament broadcast on Islamabad radio, President Ghulam Ishaq Khan blamed deviation from the Constitution for previous failures in the democratic process.

He said the Constitution had either been ignored or interpreted in accordance with political designs, which must not be repeated.

On foreign relations, Khan said Pakistan will endeavor to establish cordial, friendly relations with the USSR, while continuing to fulfill its humanitarian and Islamic responsibility toward Afghanistan's mujahidin.

The minister of state for information and broadcasting announced that the media restrictions placed on blacklisted individuals have been lifted, Islamabad radio reported.

In other developments, the radio announced that the Baluchistan governor dissolved the provincial assembly.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto declined to intervene when the Baluchistan National Assembly requested her assistance, saying it was strictly a provincial matter.

Sudan

Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi announced that a new security plan has been drawn up for the Darfur Region, Omdurman National Unity Radio reported.

The plan provides for a military command to be set up in the region to collect arms, deal with armed gangs, and prevent any border infiltrations.

Palestinian Affairs

Reportage on 'Arafat Geneva News Conference

Radio Monte Carlo Report

JN1412210088 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 2004 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Kamal Tarabayh dispatch from Geneva—live]

[Text] The news conference of PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat has ended at this moment. The journalist and press crowd that followed up Yasir 'Arafat's speech at the United Nations in Geneva yesterday moved to the round hall No 19 tonight to listen again to Yasir 'Arafat in his press conference.

This conference was scheduled to be held Wednesday morning, but it was postponed until evening out of the PLO leadership's desire to study the American reaction to Abu 'Ammar's [Yasir 'Arafat's] speech and to await the speech of the American representative, Vernon Walters, which was postponed a few hours until 1715 on Wednesday.

In front of the flashguns of scores of American, Arab, European, and even Japanese television cameras and amid the hubbub of the recorder sets of all types and sizes, Yasir 'Arafat entered with confident steps, walking quickly and smiling as usual. He stood on the platform and greeted those attending and began the news conference at 2005.

He began his news conference with a statement which he read in English. He began by greeting UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar and the UN General Assembly president.

He said: Allow me to once again express our desire for peace, our desire for peace—peace is our strategy, not tactics. The proclamation of our state gives peace to the Palestinians and the Israelis. Our life does not destroy the life of the Israelis, and the matter is not as claimed by the leaders of Israel.

Yesterday, 'Arafat added, I noted the UN resolutions. I noted our acceptance of Resolutions No 242 and 338 as a basis for negotiations with Israel within the framework of the international conference. The PNC agreed on and endorsed these resolutions in the uprising session.

Regarding terrorism, 'Arafat said: I have categorically condemned terrorism and repeated this more than once. I announce in a loud voice our abandonment of all types of terrorism, including individual terrorism, group terrorism, and state terrorism.

Then, Yasir 'Arafat wondered, saying: You hear what is being said about the lack of seriousness on the part of the Palestinian stance. And here Abu 'Ammar's voice became louder and said, repeating:

Enough, I say enough, I say enough. All outstanding issues must be discussed at the negotiating table, the table of the international peace conference, to make it clear that neither 'Arafat, 'Arafat said, nor anybody else can cancel the uprising. The uprising will not end before taking operative resolutions and before the establishment of our Palestinian state. And in this regard, I am waiting for the EEC to play a practical role to contribute to the peace march.

Finally, in his English statement, Yasir 'Arafat said: I request that you convey these words on my behalf: We seek peace, we seek peace, our commitment to peace is irreversible. We seek to live in our Palestinian state.

Then, an Israeli reporter addressed a question to him. 'Arafat replied directly, while smiling: I have fears for you that the Israeli authorities might punish you. However, you are my friend.

The Israeli reporter then asked him how he would identify the relationship between the PLO and Israel. 'Arafat referred hiim to the content of his speech.

Renounces Terrorism

JN1412204688 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 2029 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] At a news conference in Geneva this evening which ended only a few minutes ago, Yasir 'Arafat declared that the PLO recognizes the right of all the parties to the Middle East dispute to live in peace and security, including the Palestinian state and Israel, as well as all of their neighbors.

'Arafat said in his news conference that Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 are considered a basis for negotiations within the framework of an international conference on the Middle East. 'Arafat added: We renounce terrorism entirely and absolutely in all its forms, including terrorism by individuals, groups, and states.

Accepts Resolutions 242, 338

NC1412205988 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 2050 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat has announced that the PLO recognizes the right of all parties to the conflict in the Middle East, including the State of Palestine and Israel, to live in peace and security.

At a news conference he held in Geneva tonight, 'Arafat reiterated his desire for peace, adding: Peace to us is strategy, not just tactics. He went on to say that the declaration of the Palestinian state would give peace to the Palestinians and the Israelis alike, and that our presence will not destroy the presence of the Israelis.

'Arafat declared his renunciation of terrorism, whether individual group, or state terrorism. He noted: You hear of accusations that the Palestinian stand is not serious. We say: Enough. The outstanding issues should be solved at the negotiating table.

'Arafat added that the uprising will not end before practical resolutions are adopted and before the Palestinian state is established.

'Arafat again has declared his acceptance of UN Resolutions 242 and 338 as a basis for negotiations with the Israelis within the framework of an international peace conference. He called on the European group to lay a principal role in the Middle East peace process.

Paper Cites Attempt on 'Arafat's Life in Geneva

JN1512100188 Amman AKHBAR AL-USBU' in Arabic 15 Dec 88 pp 1, 16

[By Suhad al-'Anani]

[Text] Geneva—Highly-classified wide investigations are currently under way to uncover the person or persons who planned to assassinate Yasir 'Arafat in Geneva on Tuesday.

The attempt was discovered when 'Arafat's security guards noticed a suitcase among his luggage that did not belong to him. The suitcase carried his name and had labels and other things on it that removed all doubt that it did not belong to him.

Swiss security men were immediately called in. They discovered a highly-sophisticated wireless detonator in the suitcase that could have been detonated from a long distance.

The Swiss police are currently conducting a wide-scale search operation. They are scrutinizing passports of those entering or leaving the country.

Scores of suspects believed to be Mosad agents, who came from European countries or from the Middle East, were also remanded in custody.

Yasir 'Arafat Departs Geneva for GDR 15 Dec

JN1512083588 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0750 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Geneva, 15 Dec (INA)—PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat left Geneva for Berlin today on a visit to the GDR. 'Arafat delivered Palestine's speech before the UN General Assembly meetings on the Palestine question. The meetings began in Geneva last Tuesday and are scheduled to end today.

PLO Spokesman: U.S. Decision 'Turning Point'

NC1512063588 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 0500 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] The United States declared last night that it is willing to start a direct dialogue with the PLO. In a news conference at the State Department, U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz said his country is ready to conduct a direct dialogue with the PLO and that it has designated its ambassador to Tunis as its only representative in this dialogue.

Shultz said this U.S. decision comes after the PLO's statement yesterday in which it clarified that it recognizes Israel's right to exist, accepts UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and renounces terrorism, Washington's three conditions to begin dialogue with the PLO.

Shultz added that this U.S. decision aims to achieve a comprehensive peace in the Middle East through direct negotiations between the parties concenred.

In a first reaction by the PLO, the organization's spokesman Ahmad 'Abd al-Rahman has said the U.S. decision to enter into a dialogue with the PLO is viewed as a historical turning point.

He voiced his hope that this dialogue will as soon as possible result in the U.S. recognition of the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and to establishment of their independent state.

He pointed out the PLO expects this dialogue to begin immediately and that the Palestinian leadership will form the delegation which will be entrusted with initiating the dialogue in Tunis early next week.

PFLP's Habash Welcomes U.S. Decision

LD1512131188 Kuwait KUNA in English 1230 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Damascus, Dec 15 (KUNA)—Secretary General of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) Dr. George Habash welcomed Thursday the U.S. decision of starting a dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), saying a new victory for the uprising was scored.

In a press release, Habash commenting on the U.S. last night's decision, said "despite the American intention of not recognizing the Palestinian state, which was made very clearly, we welcome the move."

Yet, the Palestinian official added that the Palestinian struggle will continue and will be escalated till all international legitimate resolutions concerning the Palestinian rights to self-determination and an independent state were recognized by the United States and Israel.

One of the U.S. Administration goals of such a step was to break its isolation before the international public opinion that denounced the American stances against the Palestinian cause including the step of denying PLO Chairman 'Arafat a visa to attend the U.N. General Assembly session in New York, Habash went on.

Concluding, Habash called on the Palestinian people inside the occupied [words indistinct] the Palestinian rights were recognized by the U.S. and Israel.

PNC Chairman Welcomes Decision on Dialogue

NC1512100688 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0945 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] PNC Chairman 'Abd al-Hamid al-Sa'ih has welcomed the U.S. decision, saying: The U.S. declaration that it accepts the principle of contacting the PLO is a wise decision and indicates that the United States has begun to sense its world responsibility toward peace.

Palestinians in Syria Score 'Arafat Speech

NC1512073188 Beirut Voice of National Resistance in Arabic 0600 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Yesterday in Damascus three Palestinian leaders criticized the speech which Yasir 'Arafat delivered at the UN General Assembly in Geneva and denounced the concessions he made to Israel and the United States.

Commenting on 'Arafat's capitulationist speech, Colonel Abu Musa [Sa'id Musa Muraghah], secretary of the Provisional Command of the Palestinian National Liberation Movement-Fatah, said 'Arafat's declared capitulationist positions in Geneva only mean further concessions to the plan of the U.S. Administration and the Zionist enemy for a proposed capitulationist settlement to liquidate the Palestinian issue and end the glorious uprising of our people inside the occupied homeland.

He added: 'Arafat's treasonous speech in Geneva involves an explicit recognition of the legitimacy of the Zionist entity and the legitimacy of its usurpation of the Palestinian homeland. This confirms once again that 'Arafat has become one of the enemies of the revolution and should be treated on this basis.

Recent developments, he added, have confirmed that the continuation of the struggle is the only option for confronting the Zionist enemy and the forces supporting it. The course of capitulation and concessions will only lead to greater arrogance of the enemy in suppressing our kinfolk and people inside and outside the occupied homeland.

We call on our people inside the occupied homeland to revitalize their struggle and not to pay attention to the policy of capitulation and surrender, because it primarily aims at liquidating their uprising in favor of the Zionist enemy.

Concluding his statement, Col Abu Musa said: We call on all the patriotic Palestinian and Arab forces to declare their rejection and denunciation of 'Arafat's treasonous initiative, to immediately begin mobilizing their efforts to foil the deviating and shameful policy, and to continue raising the banner of struggle because it is our sole choice in confronting our enemies and the enemies of our revolution and nation.

In an interview with AFP, PFLP-GC Secretary General Ahmad Jibril maintained that 'Arafat has offered a heavy price in return for the mirage of a state and that Israel and the United States will ask him to make further concessions until the Palestinian issue is finally liquidated through the establishment of a Palestinian-Jordanian confederation.

Jibril added: 'Arafat's speech has clearly met the U.S. and Zionist conditions, as he was requested to do through some Arab regimes.

He said 'Arafat and these Arab regimes will not regain any part of the territories and will reach a cul-de-sac.

Answering a question by AFP, PNSF Chairman Khalid al-Fahum noted that 'Arafat has accepted the convening of an international conference on the basis of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 only, without referring to the right of self-determination and the right of the Palestinian people to return to their homeland.

Al-Fahum affirmed that by ignoring the right to return, 'Arafat did not express the view of 4 million Palestinians.

This prompts us to assert repeatedly that offering concessions without a quid pro quo does not serve the Palestinian cause nor the struggle of our people, he said.

Algeria

Bendjedid Chairs FLN Central Committee Session

LD1412190688 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] The FLN Central Committee began today its first session chaired by Chadli Bendjedid, president of the Republic and chairman of the FLN. The radio team is on line from Club Des Pins:

[Unidentified correspondent] The main feature of the Central Committee opening meeting was a speech by President Chadli Bendjedid, who said: Our meeting is important because it is an opportunity for the FLN leadership to clarify the principles and concepts arising from the Sixth FLN Congress.

The Central Committee's responsibility, the president added, is not confined to this task; on the contrary it should go beyond this to assume much greater responsibilities given the developments in the country and in Algerian society and given the importance of the sixth congress resolutions.

President Chadli Bendjedid defined the duties of the Central Committee, stressing the duties of following up and implementing all the congress resolutions and decisions. The task is not easy, the president added, because we are going through a new stage and new methods; the task of implementation is thus difficult. The Central Committee's work should be flexible as far as the duties of the Central Committee's delegate committee of implementation are concerned.

President Bendjedid added: The period is difficult and thus requires that the nation's resources be mobilized and action be concerted because the congress resolutions need a great effort, much explanation and work among the grass roots clarify the vision of militants and citizens. The Central Committee is called upon here to perform its duties, the president explained:

[Begin Bendjedid recording] The Central Committee has very important duties in the current period. In its statements and activities the Central Committee should have the necessary courage given our long standing experience and the experience which we are about to implement to understand all shortcomings and take the necessary measures to put right our affairs, at organizational or political level, in its wider sense.

So the brother members of the Central Committee should apply themselves to work among the grass roots to acquaint themselves with the reality and aspirations of the Algerian people in general and of the party militants in particular, to examine responsibly and objectively our situation, and to have the necessary courage and political will to deal with our problem. This is the right orientation and the right method for building an integrated society. [end recording]

[Correspondent] Of course, we have shortcomings and defects. However, with courage we should address our problems by clarifying the vision and defining the responsibilities of all institutions to prevent any interference or ambiguity. The president reaffirmed the same concerns that he spelled out in his address to the sixth congress.

He urged the front to open dialogue with all sincere sons of the nation who are committed to the people's choices. We should benefit from all experiences, the president asserted as he reaffirmed the need for reviewing the methods of management and organization without detracting from basic choices and gains.

President Chadli Bendjedid again stressed the importance of the comprehensive reform program. He noted the inevitability of and need for such a program:

[Begin Bendjedid recording] Probably if such an idea, that is, the idea of reforms, had been proposed in the seventies it would not have been accepted by any side or Algerian citizen for reasons such as the fact that the population numbers and the problems we face today are not the problems that existed then.

In addition, one should note the revenues from oil and gas, and so forth. However, when we faced the facts and studied the revenues from these resources we found that they have declined. Then we were faced with the facts that confirmed all the shortcomings and negative points, which in the past we could have resolved through the revenues from oil and gas. This is a fact; I am not distorting reality or saying something which is not factual. I am telling the truth.

Today, we should improve our situation and accustom our society to the truth, the true revenues, and the effort made by the Algerian citizen. We should not pursue a philosophy based on revenue for which man does not work to achieve. Let us presume that one day the oil will be exhausted, what will happen then? So we should rely on ourselves, prepare the atmosphere and conditions, and particularly prepare the attitudes. [end recording]

[Correspondent] In general these are the most important points of the speech by President Chadli Bendjedid at the Palais des Nations at the opening of the first session of the FLN Central Committee.

At the end of the morning proceedings President Chadli Bendjedid announced a proposal for the creation of a national prize that will be named after late President Houari Boumedienne.

[Begin Bendjedid recording] As we are approaching the 10th anniversary of the death of President Houari Boumedienne, I announce the creation of a national prize that will be named after him. This prize will be awarded to the best research or literary work written in the national language. [applause] [end recording]

[Correspondent] The prize will be awarded to the best research or literary work in the national language. Why? President Chadli Bendjedid explained that this measure is to encourage our researchers, intellectuals, and writers, and as a sign of respect for our Arab and Islamic civilization. It is necessary to stress the importance of the national language, and we will work toward achieving this. The use of the national language should henceforth be the main concern of the FLN's institutions and of the legislature and the executive.

[Begin Bendjedid recording] The time has come today. We should be clear the constitution, the national charter, and the rest of our national institutions. If Algeria, the people, and the state, really belong to the Arab Islamic civilization and if Islam is its spiritual affiliation then no Algerian official should any longer have any other choice or hesitate in giving this matter its true meaning. We should go back to our origins and be proud of our Arab-Islamic affiliation and our spiritual affiliation to this Islamic nation. [applause] [end recording]

[Correspondent] The morning's session was opened at exactly 1010. The agenda was adopted at the outset. The session's agenda deal with two main topics. The first deals with organizational matters which include the adoption of the front's statute and the Central Committee's statute as well as the formation of the Central Committee permanent legal committees.

The second deals with political matters and includes the definition of the axes of the FLN's activities, the election of the Central Committee secretary general and the executive secretaries. Abdelhamid Mehri then presented a report which contained the draft statute for the front and the draft statute for the Central Committee. He submitted a political draft proposal which, he asserted, is a political clarification of the program of the front's activities.

Two action committees were then formed: the organizational committee and the political committee which include all Central Committee members. The two committees will submit their work for discussion and adoption this afternoon at the end of the first session of the FLN Central Committee.

Leading Officials Elected

LD1412211188 Algiers Television Service in Arabic 1900 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] The open first session of the FLN Central Committee resumed this evening at 1845 under the chairmanship of Chadli Bendjedid, president of the FLN and president of the Republic.

The two organizational and political committee which were formed during the opening session at noon today are preparing the draft documents which will be presented to the Central Committee members.

During the second meeting of the first session, the FLN Central Committee approved the party's internal statute and the Central Committee's internal statute. These were presented by the rapporteurs of the Procedure Committee.

The Central Committee elected Abdelhamid Mehri as party secretary general on the proposal of President Chadli Bendjedid and in accordance with the party's basic statute.

On the proposal of party Secretary General Abdelhamid Mehri, the Central Committee elected its executive secretaries in accordance with Article 64 of the party's statute. These are: Hachemi Hadjres, Salah Goudjil, Abderrezak Bouhara, Mouloud Kassim, Nait Belkacem, Mohamed Saidi, Abdelkarim Souissi, Boualem Dellouci.

The Central Committee also approved the bases for political action and elected two permanent committees, one for finance and the other for control. It also approved a statement of the Central Committee. Details of the statement and a report on the evening session will be given in full in the next newscast.

FLN Central Committee Statement

LD1512100488 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 2200 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Excerpts] The FLN Central Committee session ended at the Palais des Nations this evening with the election of Mr Chadli Bendjedid as chairman and Mr Abdelhamid Mehri as secretary general. Mr Mehri appointed the executive secretaries: Hachemi Hadjres, Mouloud Kassim, Mohamed Saidi, Abdelkarim Souissi, and Boualem Dellouci.

The evening session heard reports from the organizational and political committees. The organizational committee's report comprised a number of amendments concerning the FLN and the Central COmmittee's internal organizations. The political committee's report explained the economic and social situation, the definition and renewal of FLN bodies, how to widen the FLN's basis, relations between the FLN and mass organizations, renewing the people's assemblies, the role of Algerians abroad, the FLN's relation to state institutions, the militants and the media, modernizing work methods, and the FLN's role in international relations.

The agenda, which was drawn up at the morning session, comprised two main axes: the first concerned organizational matters and included the adoption of the FLN's internal statute, and that of the Central Committee, and the formation of their permanent legal committees. The second concerned political issues and included defining the axes of FLN activity, the election of the FLN secretary general and its executive secretaries. [passage omitted]

At the end of the proceedings, President Chadli Bendjedid thanked all the brother members of the central committee, especially the members of the two committees, for their efforts to prepare the documents ratified by this session. He also thanked the Central Committee members for the trust they accorded him by nominating him, on behalf of the FLN, for this noble and difficult task. He prayed to God to help us achieve the well-being of the Algerian nation.

The FLN Central Committee adopted a statement in which it emphasized the great changes approved by the sixth congress, which were materialized in the transformation of the FLN into a driving force for political action to embrace national public opinion and take responsibility for social preoccupations. This will enable the FLN to return to its origins as an organization where all the national forces come together to face challenges, work to change old- fashioned mentalities, mobilize the nation's dynamic energies with a view to contributing effectively to building the homeland, fulfill the citizen's needs, keep up with development and the march of civilization, and to preserve our true origins and distinctive character.

The Central Committee considers the political reforms ratified by the FLN Congress as a political measure that stems from reality and as an inevitable necessity to tackle the political, social, economic, and cultural issues that are dictated by the social transformations at every stage; to confront the challenges dictated by modern times and the current transformations in the world; and to create a clean political and intellectual climate to enable all sections of society to express their preoccupations and contribute to building the homeland within the framework of respect for the laws and institutions and a correct appreciation of the country's supreme interest.

In this context, the Central Committee stressed the need to accelerate the economic reforms as an essential prerequisite to tackle social issues, especially those concerning training, employment, housing, food sufficiency, and youth issues.

The Central Committee statement calls on all the militants in the FLN and all the nation's cadres to fully mobilize to implement the resolutions issued by the FLN COngress. The statement appeals to all citizens to participate in the presidential elections with the same spirit they have been showing to ensure the continuity of the revolution and the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the congress, to protect the nation's gains, and to secure the political decision and widen horizons for the rising generations to enable them to confront the future with confidence and assurance.

Egypt

Mubarak Comments on 'Arafat UN Speech

NC1412112288 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1032 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Cairo, 14 Dec (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak has praised the speech delivered by PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat at the UN General Assembly meeting in Geneva yesterday. He described the speech as "truly splendid."

President Mubarak talked to reporters today after paying a visit to the Soviet Embassy in Cairo to offer condolences on the victims of the earthquake in Armenia. He pointed out that 'Arafat spoke about UN Security Council Resolutions Nos 242 and 338 and that the international peace conference should be based on these resolutions, which are "unambiguous."

The president asserted that this represents a very strong point, adding that 'Arafat noted in his speech that Israel must live within secure borders, the pre-1967 borders.

President Mubarak noted that in his speech 'Arafat touched on the confederation with Jordan and reiterated his denunciation of terrorism in clear terms. I do not know what more is required of 'Arafat, the president stated.

The president said that 'Arafat is a very moderate person and that it took strenuous efforts to enable him to deliver his speech before the UN General Assembly and the world. He noted that 'Arafat himself put in much effort for that purpose.

The president continued: The American and Israeli people should not forget that everyone, including 'Arafat, denounces terrorism. However, he said, no one can guarantee that a terrorist operation will not occur. There may be one or more persons who will try to torpedo peace efforts through a terrorist operation financed by other countries.

President Mubarak asserted that he has no doubt as to 'Arafat's sincerity in denouncing terrorism. He said: I am certain of this. However, he said, someone may carry out a terrorist operation while 'Arafat is giving a speech, or on any other occasion while 'Arafat is talking about peace and denouncing terrorism.

The president went on: If any Palestinian faction carries out a terrorist operation, we should not blame it on 'Arafat or say that he supports terrorism. This could happen, he said, and no head of state in the world can give a 100 percent guarantee that none of his citizens will carry out a terrorist operation to embarrass the country's leader.

Mubarak said the U.S. Administration must realize this clearly, and he believes that this is what will happen.

President Husni Mubarak said: "The U.S. Administration must encourage the moderate voice in the region and must be supportive of its friends." He added that 'Arafat delivered a speech which included all the points, and there is no need to issue statements saying that 'Arafat had not mentioned those points in a definite manner.

President Mubarak said he believes that it is sufficient that 'Arafat touched on all points, including the recognition of Israel as a secure state living next to the Palestinian state in accordance with UN Resolution No 181 from 1947. President Mubarak pointed out that 'Arafat also spoke of renouncing terrorism, as well as about the international conference and UN Security Council Resolutions Nos 242 and 338.

President Mubarak said that even after an international peace conference begins the world must know that the Palestinian issue will not have yet ended. He said there will still be long and arduous efforts [words indistinct], and we must not complicate the issue from the beginning.

To a question on Egypt's next move with regard to the United States, President Husni Mubarak said: "We are always communicating with the Americans and the Israelis. They must understand the issue very clearly and encourage moderation in this region."

The president went on to say that contacts are continuing to promote the peace process. He expressed hope that the United States and Israel will show a clear understanding of 'Arafat's speech, despite the fact that Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir does not want to solve [word indistinct].

The president added: The entire world wants peace, and 'Arafat said that he wants peace. All peace-loving powers in Israel must encourage this, he said, adding: The United States must encourage this tendency, because we all want peace and work for it. It is enough that 'Arafat's call from the UN platform in Geneva was: "Let us all work together for peace."

The president replied to another question on the U.S. and Israeli stances and their reflections on peace. He said that within Israel there are powers which want peace, and we should encourage these powers. He added that a small group of Israelis obstruct peace, and we want peace.

Mubarak was asked if there is a need for an Arab summit to arrive at a unified Arab view, especially since there is a new U.S. Administration. The president said: An ordinary Arab summit will soon be held in Riyadh, and His Majesty King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, guardian of the two holy mosques, is making efforts to hold this summit at the soonest possible time.

In his remarks, the president emphasized the importance of holding this Arab summit under these particular circumstances. He said: The Palestinian issue is at the crossroads and there is a new U.S. Administration and a new Israeli Government. Therefore, he said, we have to mobilize our efforts to take the one and same course toward peace.

Commenting on the GCC summit scheduled for December, President Mubarak said that the presidents and kings of the Gulf countries will meet to coordinate their stands and reach agreement for the public interest. He noted that they are making utmost efforts in this regard, and expressed the hope that all Arab countries will do the same.

The president responded to a question by a Soviet reporter on the earthquake catastrophe which hit the Soviet Armenian Republic. He said: I think you know the Egyptian people's feeling toward this calamity that occurred in the Soviet Armenian Republic. He added: We fully sympathize with the Armenian people, and we hope that the Soviet Union, which is a friendly country linked to us by good relations, will be able to overcome this calamity which shook the entire world, and will continue its construction plans.

Telephones Shultz

NC1412162688 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1600 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Cairo, 14 Dec (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak held a 15-minute telephone conversation with U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz. The talks dealt with the most important points contained in Yasir 'Arafat's speech before the UN General Assembly in Geneva.

President Mubarak and Shultz also reviewed the contents of the Swedish foreign minister's speech before the UN General Assembly today, which asserts the positive points contained in 'Arafat's speech. During the conversation, the president urged the United States to assume a more understanding and positive stand with regard to the constructive resolutions which the PLO has adopted in recent weeks.

Sends Messages to Reagan, Shultz

NC1512142688 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1357 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Cairo, 15 Dec (MENA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak sent messages today to U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Secretary of State George Shultz, thanking them for the U.S. stand on the Palestinian issue.

Al-Baz: Decision To Improve Ties With Arabs

NC1512102288 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1000 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Dr Usamah al-Baz, Foreign Ministry first under secretary and director of the President's Office for Political Affairs, said today that the U.S. decision to establish contacts with the PLO will impove Washington's relations with the Arab world and strengthen the position of the moderates within the PLO. In a statement to REUTER in Bahrain, Al-Baz disclosed that President Mubarak had sent three messages to U.S. President Ronald Reagan over the past 4 days, urging Washington to hold talks with the PLO.

Foreign Ministry: Decision 'Significant' Step

NC1512114288 Cairo MENA in English 1134 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Cairo Dec 15 (MENA)—Egypt today welcomed the United States decision to begin direct talks with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

A Foreign Ministry source described the U.S. decision as a significant step and positive development on the road towards peace in the region.

The source pointed out that Egypt had played a major role towards the achievement of that step, namely direct dialogue between the U.S. and the PLO.

'Abd al-Majid Welcomes U.S. Call for Dialogue

NC1512122288 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1156 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Geneva, 15 Dec (MENA)—Dr 'Ismat 'Abd al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has announced that Egypt welcomes the U.S. declaration of its readiness to initiate a direct dialogue with the PLO. He said: We are pleased with U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz' statement and the decision to start a dialogue with the PLO. We believe that such a dialogue will yield positive results and develop understanding. We hope that this dialogue will mark the beginning of cooperation and consultation among all parties concerned with the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Dr 'Abd al-Majid is expected to leave Geneva for home on Friday, at the conclusion of intensive consultations on the sidelines of the current UN General Assembly session meetings in Geneva, especially with the permanent members of the UN Security Council and with the foreign ministers of the Arab countries group and Nonaligned countries.

Papers Comment on 'Historic' 'Arafat Speech

NC1412082388 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0630 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Excerpt] Cairo, 14 Dec (MENA)—The three Cairo dailies describe the speech delivered by Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat at the beginning of the UN General Assembly session on the Palestinian cause held in its Geneva headquarters as a "glorious and historic demonstration" during which the whole world wore the Palestinian headdress.

Under the headline "Public Trial for Israel in Geneva", AL-AKHBAR writes that the UN session on the Palestinian cause, which began in Geneva, has turned into a public trial on the widest scale of a regime which wants to turn back the clock through initiating a new type of imperialism, after the world freed itself of this hateful system, and through depriving our people of the right to live on their soil freely and with dignity.

The paper notes that the world demonstration staged in Geneva yesterday was unprecedented in the history of the United Nations. The votes of the great majority of the UN members agreed on one thing; namely, to support the Palestinian people and the positive steps and historic decisions adopted by the PNC to provide a favorable atmosphere for resolving the Palestinian issue peacefully and end the ongoing bloodshed and the Palestinian people's unjustified suffering.

In its editorial, AL-AKHBAR notes that the historic speech made by Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat has placed the members of the international community before their responsibilities, which have been stipulated by the UN charter. This charter, the paper says, grants the peoples of the world their right to self-determination and prohibits inhuman repressive measures and the seizure and occupation of lands by force.

The paper notes that 'Arafat's announcement of his willingness to respect the peace and security of all the countries in the region, including Israel, has refuted all the pretexts used by Tel Aviv and its sole ally, Washington.

In conclusion, the paper expresses the hope that the world support for the Palestinian cause, demonstrated in the UN meetings and resolutions, will lead to a positive world stand which will restore the usurped Palestinian rights and lands without delay.

AL-JUMHURIYAH asserts that the Palestinian issue and the Middle East dispute have entered a new stage. This new stage demands strenuous and sincere efforts to turn the initiatives and proposals to hold an international peace conference into a concrete reality which the whole world has been waiting for and is capable of achieving through the United Nations. [passage omitted]

USSR Envoy in Cairo Discusses 'Arafat Speech

NC1412124688 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1135 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Excerpts] Cairo, 14 Dec (MENA)—Soviet Ambassador in Cairo Gennadiy Zhuravlev has expressed his country's appreciation for the relief aid sent by Egypt to the victims of the earthquake in the Soviet Armenian republic. He thanked President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, the government, and people for this assistance.

The Soviet ambassador was talking to reporters, following a visit paid by President Husni Mubarak to the Soviet Embassy to offer condolences. The ambassador stated that President Mubarak had assured him of Egypt's readiness to extend all possible assistance to the Soviet Union to help it handle this tragic catastrophe in Armenia.

Zhuravlev said that he told the president about the effects of this disaster and the efforts being made to overcome them. He noted that some Soviet citizens are still alive under the rubble and that strenuous efforts are being made to rescue them. [passage omitted]

Responding to a question on 'Arafat's speech to the UN meeting in Geneva yesterday, the ambassador said the Soviet Union had supported all the points and ideas brought forward at the recent PNC meeting in Algiers and that his country had recognized the new Palestinian state.

Ambassador Zhuravlev stated that 'Arafat made certain good proposals in his speech, proposals designed to bring about a lasting peace in the region and end the Arab-Israeli dispute. He noted that through its permanent membership in the UN Security Council, his country is making efforts at present to help initiate practical steps leading to an international peace conference and draw up a schedule for starting the peace process.

The Soviet ambassador expressed the belief that, in his speech yesterday, 'Arafat presented certain points which will pave the way for taking practical steps in the direction of peace.

Mubarak Meets Thai Prince, Italian Delegation

NC1412173188 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak received the Thai crown prince this afternoon. Prime Minister Dr 'Atif Sidqi attended the meeting.

President Mubarak also received a Italian Senate delegation at the presidential offices this afternoon. Dr Rif'at al-Mahjub, People's Assembly speaker; Dr Muhammad 'Abdallah, chairman of the People's Assembly Committee on Foreign Relations; and the Italian ambassador to Cairo attended the meeting.

Following the meeting, Flaminio Piccoli, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Italian parliament, said that the delegation discussed several issues with President Mubarak, particularly the Palestinian issue and recent related developments. President Mubarak, Piccoli said, stressed the importance of the European role with regard to the Palestinian issue.

The Italian official mentioned that Egyptian-Italian economic cooperation and ways of strengthening it also were discussed at the meeting. Piccoli stated that Egypt is currently playing a crucial role in uniting Arab ranks and fusing Arab views.

Thai Prince Ends Official Visit, Departs

NC1512092288 Cairo MENA in English 0855 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Cairo, Dec 15 (MENA)—Thai Crown Prince Maha Wachiralongkon left here this morning for Luxor after a five-day official visit to Egypt.

He was seen off at the airport by Premier Dr 'Atif Sidqi and a number of senior officials.

During his private visit to Luxor, the Thai crown prince is escorted by Fu'ad Iskandar, minister of emigration and Egyptian expatriates affairs.

Italian Senate Delegation Concludes Visit

NC1512095088 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0925 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Cairo, 15 Dec (MENA)—An Italian Senate delegation led by Flaminio Piccoli, chairman of the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee, left Cairo this morning at the conclusion of a 3-day visit during which it was received by President Husni Mubarak. During their stay, the delegation members met with People's Assembly Speaker Dr Rif'at al-Mahjub and Muhammad 'Abdallah, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the People's Assembly.

Oil Prices Fixed for Remainder of December

NC1512102788 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0909 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Cairo, 15 Dec (MENA)—Egypt has decided to fix its crude oil prices for the second half of December, beginning today. This was stated by Hammad Ayyub, the petroleum organization's deputy chairman for foreign trade, at the conclusion of a meeting held by the Egyptian Oil Pricing Committee. The prices are as follows: Gulf of Suez and Ra's al-Bihar crude, $12.75 per barrel; Bala'im Crude, $11.90 per barrel; Badran crude, $10.75; and Gharib crude, $10.45.

It is recalled that the international oil market situation is unstable, and prices are fluctuating.

Libya

'Masses' Demonstrate Over Recognition of Israel

LD1512132488 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 1230 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] At educational institutions in many areas in the Great Jamahiriyah the generation of anger masses have staged demonstrations of anger and rejection against the defeatist and capitulationist actions that are being undertaken in the Arab arena, and which are represented by the recognition of the Zionist enemy.

During their demonstrations, the generation of anger masses stressed their total rejection of this defeatist and capitulationist move and also stressed their support for the children of the revolution of stones. This is led by the generation of anger through its people's committees in occupied Palestine, in order to make more sacrifices for victory in the cause of freedom and liberation of Arab territories from the Zionist usurpers. [passage indistinct]

Minutes on Cooperation With Algeria Signed

LD1412210388 Tripoli Voice of Greater Arab Homeland in Arabic 1230 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Excerpt] The minutes of the meeting of the seventh session of the Libyan Arab-Algerian followup committee were signed this morning in Tripoli. The minutes were signed by the brother secretary of the General People's Committee for public services, and brother Mohamed Taher Bouzghoub, minister of light industries in sisterly Algeria.

The minutes of the followup committee meeting provide for the followup of the agreements and the minutes concluded between the two fraternal countries, and cooperation in energy, the chemical and petrochemical industries, the project of connecting electricity between the two countries, and the project of the aluminum complex.

The minutes of the meeting stressed cooperation in the machine industries, electrical household goods industries, electronic industries, and iron and steel.

The minutes of the followup committee meeting also provide for joint cooperation in technical and agricultural spheres, forestry, maritime fishing, public and economic services, and commercial, monetary and bank exchanges.

The minutes also included cooperation in posts, telecommunications, information, culture, social affairs, health, education, scientific research, training, tourism sports, youth, planning, and cooperation in manpower.

The committee also recommended the amalgamation of current factories in the two countries and an effort to create joint factories to meet the need of the two fraternal countries in imported goods from abroad, and to call on the other Arab maghreb countries to join in and create new industries. [passage omitted]

Sudan

Al-Mahdi on New Western Border Security Plan

EA1412164488 Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1300 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] The National Defense Council has approved an urgent security plan drawn up by the government to rectify the deteriorating security situation in Darfur region. The plan provides for the establishment of a joint military command made up of the Armed Forces and the police which will implement special security measures in Darfur.

The tasks of the command will be to collect arms from individuals and tribes, to deal with gangs of armed robbers to prevent all forms of infiltration across the border and to enforce emergency measures to protect the areas adjacent to the border with Libya and Chad.

This was revealed by Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi when he addressed the Constituent Assembly yesterday on the security situation in Darfur region. His excellency said that the deterioration of the security situation in the region was caused by the Chad-Libya conflict, the Chadian civil war and the bloody fighting between Chadian forces and armed groups hostile to the government of Hissein Habre.

Gangs of armed robbers were also active in the border areas between Chad and Darfur, and robberies were taking place in the regions markets and towns. On top of this there were retaliatory clashes between local tribes.

Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi said that the government decided not to negotiate with any groups or any armed foreign forces penetrating Sudanese territory. Clear orders have been issued to the armed forces in Darfur to repulse decisively any foreign forces or groups or other armed men crossing the Sudanese border at any point.

Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi said that the government had negotiated with Ibn 'Umar's forces in order to ascertain the facts of the situation, but that would not be the basis of Sudan's treatment of any other foreign forces that might penetrate its territory.

Al-Mahdi Proposes Constitutional Conference

EA1412195488 Khartoum SUNA in English 1720 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Khartoum, 14th December—Premier al-Sadiq al-Mahdi has asked the constituent assembly (parliament) to consent on holding the constitutional conference on current 31st December, as it was proposed by the peace agreement.

Al-Mahdi, who addressed the parliament here today, said the peace agreement signed between the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) has surpassed the differences on the Islamic laws and the constitution of Sudan.

Sudanese political parties inside and outside the parliament have agreed upon the peace agreement except the Islamic National Front (INF), which expressed some reservations, Al-Mahdi said. The prime minister confirmed that the INF will take part in the constitutional conference and the preparatations to be taken in this regard.

Al-Mahdi urged all the political forces to support the peace agreement and those who express reservations to take part in the constitutional conference.

The prime minister called on the SPLM to stop the war, confirming that the Sudanese people need peace based on justice. The peace initiatives carried out by all political parties have paved the way for peace, Al-Mahdi added.

Al-Mahdi reiterated in his address to the parliament his calls to delegate power for him to take the necessary steps for the implementation of the peace agreement.

Opposition Leader Comments on Need To Halt War

PM1312130788 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 10 Dec 88 p 3

[Interview with Democratic Unionist Party Deputy Secretary General Sayyid Ahmad al-Husayn by Al-Sir Sayyid Ahmad in Riyadh; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Ahmad] It is now 3 weeks since you signed the agreement with the SPLM, but it still has not been translated into anything on the ground. Why this delay?

[Al-Husayn] It is known that the initiative was welcomed by all the Sudanese people. Proof of this was the way the delegation was received after its visit to Addis Ababa and the neighboring and fraternal states. But the government was late in accepting the initiative. The prime minister issued a statement recently, reflecting acceptance as well as the intention of sending the foreign and defense ministers to brief the movement on the government's acceptance. [passage omitted]

The delay is perhaps attributable to the fact that the [National Islamic] Front, which is a partner in the government, has some objections to the agreement. Nevertheless, the front has announced that it would take part in the constitutional conference. [passage omitted]

[Ahmad] Is it true that a meeting was held recently in Cairo between you and the Garang movement?

[Al-Husayn] This is one the rumors spread by the enemies of peace. We have nobody in Cairo, nor does the movement.

[Ahmad] Let us return to the agreement itself, especially the point which talks about abrogating the military agreements that harm national sovereignty. Does your signing of a clause such as this not mean that you tacitly acknowledge their existence? And how can this happen when you are government members?

[Al-Husayn] The signing does not mean that we acknowledge the agreement's existence. When the matter was raised, we told the movement that that was unreasonable, especially as we are partners in power. But the right attitude in a case such as this is not denial, withdrawal, or suspension of talks. [passage omitted]

[Ahmad] One observation made about that clause is that it is unbalanced, because it aims to stop military supplies to Sudan and at the same time continue them to the movement. Why did you not raise this point?

[Al-Husayn] We did not talk about military supplies at all. The issue that was raised was the military agreements that harm national sovereignty. Apart from this, the Sudanese Army obtains whatever supplies it can secure; and so does the movement. [passage omitted]

[Ahmad] Some believe that the initiative, in cooperation with some regional and international forces, aims to obstruct the Shari'a issue in Sudan. What is your opinion?

[Al-Husayn] This claim is an insult to Sudanese political thinking. Do these forces really fear the application of Islamic punishment laws in Sudan? The Sudanese people warmly welcomed the agreement. Did these forces influence them to do that? We cannot isolate ourselves from Sudanese public opinion. And I believe that we have expressed this through the agreement.

We are in a terrible and deteriorating economic situation and threatened with losing our democracy, indeed our independence. We will never be able to stand on our feet unless there is stability, which can only be achieved by stopping the war—which is why the initiative was made.

SPLA Expresses Surprise Over News on Meeting

EA1312160088 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 13 Dec 88

[Text] The official spokesman of the SPLA has expressed surprise to the persistent news emanating from Khartoum over the last 10 days that some government ministers from Khartoum were to meet SPLA leaders. The spokesman said that the movement is not averse to meeting government ministers.

However, Khartoum has been making unilateral announcements without prior contacts and arrangements with the movement and making decisions as to who should be met in the movement.

The spokesman said that it is better for Khartoum regime to stop political scheming and sit down to take serious steps to implement what is stipulated in the DUP-SPLA peace initiative. The cabinet is required to formally endorse the peace initiative. This, however, has not happened. It is only when the cabinet endorses the peace initiative and the parliament adopts it that the peace process moves forward.

Alliance Praises SPLM-SPLA-DUP Meeting

EA1312173288 (Clandestine) Radio of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army in English 1300 GMT 13 Dec 88

[Text] In a related development, the movement [as heard] has received a letter from the national alliance acknowledging receipt of the movement's letter of 25 November

1988 regarding the necessary steps the government needs to take for the peace initiative to move forward. The full text of the letter of the alliance reads as follows:

Alternate Commander Deng Alor Kuol, acting director, office of chairman and Commander in Chief SPLM-SPLA, Addis Ababa: Dear brother, greetings: I am writing to acknowledge your letter of 25 November, which was read to the National Alliance for National Salvation [NANS] Council meeting on 29 November.

The National Alliance congratulate both the SPLM-SPLA the DUP [Democratic Unionist Party] on the gallant step toward peace and reiterates its firm support of the Sudanese peace initiative. I am directed by the council to express its appreciation of the letter and for the clarification of the circumstances surrounding the NANS' invitation to the SPLM-SPLA-DUP meeting. The council has taken note of the SPLM-SPLA's position concerning prerequisites 1, 2, and 3 of the initiative, and of the importance of their passage by the assembly.

Regarding this point and the earlier one concerning the invitation, I would like to assure that our envoy, Dr Taysir Muhammad Ahmad, had emphasized to them in his briefing to the council following his return from Addis earlier last month. The council remains cognizant of the need to consolidate efforts of the forces of the uprising to speed up the peace process and ending of bloodshedd. With our best regards and hopes that the new year will bring us closer to the new Sudan of stability, progress, and peace.

Yours sincerely, Hasan al-Amin, the steering committee, the Secretariat of the National Alliance.

SUNA: Coup Attempted, Foiled 'Last Week'

EA1412170488 Khartoum SUNA in French 1525 GMT 14 Dec 88

["Statement About an Attempted Coup—SUNA headline]

[Excerpt] Khartoum, 14 Dec (SUNA)—A coup attempt was mounted last week but it was anticipated and foiled in its initial stages. The coup attempt was staged by a lieutenant-colonel. Mr 'Abd al-Rahman Sa'id, deputy chief of staff for operations, revealed this in an interview with Wednesday's issue of the daily newspaper, AL-USBU'.

He added that the officer had not been acting on behalf of any party or political faction. Mr Sa'id said that the man behind the coup had been supported by only five serving military personnel, some of whom had warned the authorities.

During interrogation, the adventurer had indicated that his intention had been to do something about the deteriorating conditions in the country, Mr Sa'id disclosed. The deputy chief of staff also said that [words indistinct] united ranks and that they were guarding the country's democracy. [indistinct passage omitted]

State Council Member Holds News Conference

EA1412200488 Khartoum SUNA in English 1725 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Khartoum, 14th December—Two documents on achievement of peace in Sudan and improvement of regional relations will be submitted to the constitutional and political institutions shortly, announced member of the Council of State, Mirghani al-Nasri.

Al-Nasri told a press conference here today that the first document called for the unity of the internal front and bolstering the democratic option in the country. The document stressed the necessity of achieving peace in Sudan, Al-Nasri confirmed, adding that it called for holding the constitutional conference before the end of current year.

The second document, Al-Nasri said, urged the Sudanese people to support the peace agreement signed between the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM).

General on 'Intensive Action' Against Rebels

EA0812160388 Khartoum SUNA in English 1100 GMT 8 Dec 88

[Text] Khartoum, 8th Dec (SUNA)—The security situation in the south is very calm, in particular in the Eastern Equatoria Region, and the army is in full control of all the combat areas, said the armed forces commander-in-chief, General Fathi Ahmad.

Gen Fathi, in press statements yesterday, said: "the presence of some rebel elements in some small areas does not mean they control them." He said the upcoming period will witness "intensive actions" by the Army in the combat zones, especially after the end of the rainy season.

NIF Warns Government on Islamic Laws

EA0712220288 Khartoum SUNA in English 1740 GMT 7 Dec 88

[Text] Khartoum, 7th December—The National Islamic Front (NIF) parliamentary group secretary, Muhammad al-Hasan al-Amin, has renewally affirmed the NIF rejection to participate in any government that freezes the Islamic hudud (Islamic punishments).

In a statement to the daily "AL-SUDANI," Al-Amin said the NIF sticks to rejecting the freezing of Hudud as a condition that touches the Sudanese peoles freedom of choosing. He warned that the existent accord will entirely blow up if the Constituent Assembly or the cabinet takes such a step.

It is understood that the freezing of the Islamic Hudud is among the conditions included in the peace agreement signed recently in Addis Ababa between the SPLM and the co-ruling Democratic Unionist Party of leader Muhammad Uthman al-Mirghani.

'Residential Representation' in PDRY

EA0812164488 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1030 GMT 8 Dec 88

[Text] Yesterday Evening the Council of Ministers approved the establishment of residential representation in Aden. Sudan will be represented at charge d'affaires level. The decision is based on our foreign policy priorities which are to strengthen Arab Solidarity and to put political relations with fraternal states on a correcting footing. [Remainder of item indistinct]

Tunisia

Yasir 'Arafat Statement on Talks With Ben Ali

LD1012160288 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 10 Dec 88

[Text] President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali received at the Palace of the Republic in Carthage this monring Mr Yasir 'Arafat, PLO Executive Committee chairman. 'Arafat was accompanied by Messrs Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO's Political Department, and Hakim Bal'awi, PLO representative to Tunisia.

Mr Yasir 'Arafat later made the following statement:

[Begin recording] I was happy to meet, together with Abu al-Lutf [Faruq Qaddumi], his excellency the president this morning. I discussed with him a number of important pan-Arab and Palestinian issues, prior to my departure to Geneva where I will deliver a speech on Palestine before the United Nations General Assembly, which was transferred from New York by (?154) votes.

This large international consensus on the transfer of the United Nations General Assembly's proceedings to Geneva demonstrates this great international cohesion around the Palestinian cause.

I also acquainted his excellency the president with all the details concerning the latest developments of the Palestinian cause, including the details on which we talk, through which we move, and with which we intensify our talks and our political action in all directions.

As is his custom, his excellency the president expressed the committed and principled stand adopted by Tunisia, its people, its government, and its president alongside the just cause of their brethren the Palestinian fighters with the same constancy and great fraternal warmth.

I also thanked the brother president for everything offered by Tunisia and the Tunisian people and by him personally to his Palestinian brethren at all levels. [end recording]

'Results' of Commission Meeting With Libya

LD1212235188 Tunis TAP in French 1615 GMT 12 Dec 88

[Text] Tunis, 12 Dec (TAP)—The fourth session of the high Tunisian-Libyan Joint Commission held in Tunis 6-7 December produced two kinds of results, the first regarding recent achievements and the second the program to be implemented in the short term in various areas.

These results are as follows:

1. Exchange of the instruments of ratification of the agreement as [words indistinct] the field of trade and customs which will permit the volume of regular trade to be increased while strengthening the flow of exchanges in various sectors not governed by agreements and not requiring the opening of credits.

2. The two sides have agreed to undertake the study of the bases and rules of policies with regard to the subsidizing of staple goods and the harmonization of price policies. This study should be completed before the next session of the high commission.

3. The adoption of a mixed company for the joint prospecting and exploitation of fuel deposits on the continental shelf.

4. The two sides have decided to commission a 30 kilowatt power line between the Tunisian and Libyan stations at (?Ras Jedir) [words indistinct] before the end of this month, [words indistinct] of the Libyan electric grid to the region of Burj al-Khirbah before the end of the first half of 1989. [Words indistinct] a company specializing in the construction, putting into operation, and maintenance of electric grids. [Words indistinct]

5. The study of the route of the Zouara-Zarzis pipeline beginning 20 December.

6. In the industrial sphere, the two sides—who reaffirmed their wish to carry out joint industrial projects where the main role will be entrusted to the private sector—also decided to work toward exploiting to the full the existing industrial and production capacity in the two countries in order to implement the expected complementarity.

It was also agreed to establish coordination between the two sides to ensure that both contribute to implementing projects in the two countries selected on the basis of their complementary nature.

7. On the subject of financial matters, a Maghreb investment and partnership company and a Maghreb international trade company were set up and these will become operational in 1989.

8. Work on modernizing the section of the road between Ben Guerdane and Ras Jedir will begin in January 1989.

9. The two sides reached agreement on the employment conditions of 10,000 Tunisians in the Jamahiriyah as far as both wages and transfers are concerned.

10. The two sides devoted attention to the question of coordinating their systems and programs in the fields of education, culture, and young people.

They also noted with satisfaction the cooperation which exists in the fields of information, radio, and the press through the exchange of newspapers, publications, and radio and television programs and through joint programs covering issues concerning the two peoples.

11. The two sides decided to work for the unification of benefits in the area of health at the level of adjacent municipalities and governorates with a view to the amalgamation of preventive health programs.

Kuwait

Foreign Minister, Iran's Lavasani Hold Talks

LD1512112488 Kuwait KUNA in English 1113 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Geneva, Dec 15 (KUNA)—Kuwait Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah Thusday had a 45 minute meeting in Geneva with Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammad Hoseyn Lavasani.

Among the topics covered in the talks were recent developments in the region and the status of the Iran-Iraq talks on the implementation of Resolution 598, Kuwaiti officials said.

Defense Minister: Gulf States Want Mines Cleared

JN1412145688 Kuwait ARAB TIMES in English 13 Dec 88 p 4

[By Husayn Salamah]

[Text] Defence Minister Shaykh Nawwaf al-Ahmad said that all Gulf states are concerned about the threat posed by mines in Gulf waters.

All Gulf states are interested in cleaning the Gulf waters to ensure smooth navigation, and Iran has formed a special Navy task force to detect mines in the Gulf waters, the official said.

Kuwait's Navy has located mines in Kuwaiti territorial waters and have dealt with them.

In an exclusive interview with AL-SIYASAH and the ARAB TIMES, the minister said that the issues of security will be discussed by Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) leaders during their ninth summit due to begin in Manama on Dec 19. The official expressed hope that the GCC states will succeed in uniting the six countries on every issue, especially in areas related to defence, security and passports.

Though ruling out resumption of hostilities between Iran and Iraq, Shaykh Nawwaf stressed that the ceasefire does not mean an end of the war and a solution to the problem.

The official said: "Much work with good intentions is still essential towards totally solving the conflict."

He added that Iran, which accepted the United Nations Security Council resolution, will not resume the war. If the two countries are strengthening their military forces, this does not necessarily mean they are preparing to resume fighting, he said.

In relation to the visit to Kuwait by U.S. Defence Secretary Frank Carlucci, he said that talks centred on military issues. The U.S. is not planning to withdraw all of its forces from the Gulf as long as total stability is not achieved, he said.

He also added that the U.S. will not totally abandon its military presence in the Gulf as this presence is old and not linked to the Gulf war.

The minister praised the visit of hh the amir to the Ali al-Salim and Ahmad al-Jabir air bases, adding that the visits greatly influenced the morale of the Kuwaiti Air Force.

Oman

'Legal Recognition' of Palestinian State Declared

JN1212142688 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1336 GMT 12 Dec 88

[Text] Muscat, 12 Dec (WAKH)—The Sultanate of Oman today declared its official and legal recognition of the independent Palestinian state, which was declared during the recent extraordinary PNC session in Algiers.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued an official statement on that today. Following is the text:

Proceeding from the Sultanate of Oman's stand supporting the interests of the Palestinian people and Arab rights, based on the contacts held between the Sultanate and the PLO in light of developments concerning the Palestine question, and affirming the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, the Sultanate of Oman has decided to recognize officially and legally the independent Palestinian state, which was declared by the 19th PNC extraordinary session 12-15 November 1988 in Algiers.

The Sultanate is sure that the Palestinian state will contribute to peace and stability in the Middle East, which will promote peace and serve the interests of the Arab states.

Sultan Qabus Returns From Saudi Arabia, UAE

JN1012090888 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0520 GMT 10 Dec 88

[Text] Manama, 9 Dec (WAKH)—His Majesty Sultan Qabus ibn Sa'id of Oman returned to Muscat this evening following a private visit to Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Sultan Qabus held talks with Saudi King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, and His Highness Shaykh Zayid ibn Sultan Al Nuhayyan, UAE president.

Iraq's Ramadan Meets Sultan Qabus, Departs

JN1112142688 Muscat Domestic Service in Arabic 1300 GMT 11 Dec 88

[Text] His Excellency Taha Yasin Ramadan, Iraqi RCC member and first deputy prime minister, and his accompanying delegation left the country this afternoon following a brief visit to the Sultanate.

During the visit, he had the honor of meeting with His Majesty Sultan Qabus ibn Sa'id and handed him a message from his brother His Excellency Saddam Husayn, president of the fraternal Republic of Iraq, dealing with bilateral cooperation and consultations on Arab issues in the current phase.

His excellency and accompanying delegation were seen off by His Excellency Qays ibn 'Abd al-Mun'im al-Zawawi, deputy prime minister for financial and economic affairs; and His Excellency Khalid Salih al-Samarra'i, Iraqi ambassador to the Sultanate.

Qatar

'Responsible Source' Welcomes 'Arafat UN Speech

JN1412164488 Manama WAKH in English 1556 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Doha, Dec 14 (GNA)—The State of Qatar has welcomed the historic speech delivered by Chairman of the PLO Executive Committee Yasir 'Arafat yesterday before the United Nations General Assembly Session.

A responsible source told QATAR NEWS AGENCY that the State of Qatar which believed in the justice of the Palestinian issue and the Palestinian people's struggle to restore legitimate rights, like the Arab and Islamic states, supports in full the initiative announced by Chairman 'Arafat for settling the Palestinian issue, which constituted the crux of the Middle East problem.

The source added that the State of Qatar is considering the Palestinian initiative, made public by 'Arafat for solving this problem, which is based on the international legality and the [UN] Charter and resolutions of the United Nations, as a new turning point which deserves comprehensive world support for settling peace based on justice in the Middle East.

The responsible source added that the speech of Palestine has announced to the whole world in a clear cut way the Palestinian people's belief in the need for resolving regional and international issues through peaceful means, its rejection of terrorism without affecting its natural right to defend itself and to peaceful coexistence. The people of Palestine affirmed through its courageous uprising its determination to continue with rejecting occupation and its adherence to establishing its independent state on its national soil.

The source went on to say the State of Qatar is appealing to the world community and the superpowers in particular to support the people of Palestine in its just demands with the right to self-determination to the fore and to acknowledge the Palestinian independent state for settling peace in the Middle East.

Saudi Arabia

Syrian President Resumes Talks With King Fahd

JN1412141288 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1215 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad and King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, resumed their meetings in Riyadh today.

The meeting was attended by Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'. On the Saudi side, the meeting was attended by Prince 'Abdallah ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, the crown prince, deputy prime minister, and head of the National Guard.

This morning, Prince 'Abdallah visited President Hafiz al-Asad at his residence in the Riyadh guest palace. The meeting was attended by Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

Departs After Talks

LD1412191588 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Excerpts] His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad, president of the Syrian Arab Republic, left Riyadh at 1800.

He was seen off by the custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz Al Saud, at the King Khalid International Airport. He was also seen off by Prince 'Abdallah ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, the crown prince, deputy prime minister, and head of the National Guard. [passage omitted]

A responsible source told SPA that the visit of His Excellency President al-Asad to his brother, the custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, comes within the context of consultations between the brother leaders of the Arab states, especially at this important phase through which the Arab region is passing and which calls for the intensification of joint efforts to achieve the hopes and expectations of the Arab motherland.

The source added that the talks dealt with all issues pertaining to the Arab arena and current events in general. [passage omitted]

Afghan Mujahidin Leader Thanks King Fahd

LD1412194388 Riyadh Domestic Service in Arabic 1800 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Burhanuddin Rabbani, head of the Afghan Islamic Mujahidin Alliance, has expressed gratitude and appreciation to the Kingdom, under the leadership of King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, for hosting the talks in Al-Ta'if on 3 December between the Afghan mujahidin and the Soviets.

In an interview with AL-HAWADITH magazine, to be published Friday in London, Rabbani said the meeting resulted in great progress toward achieving peace in Afghanistan. The Afghan leader added that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was, and still is, the foremost supporter of the Afghan cause. It also gives the mujahidin assistance and support everywhere and at every level, especially at Islamic and international forums.

In reply to a question about the reason for choosing the Kingdom as a venue for the meeting, Rabbani said: That goes back to what everyone knows—that is, the credibility of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, its avoidance of political maneuvers, and its pursuance of wisdom ever since its foundations by King 'Abd al-'Aziz, may God rest his soul. This policy has been pursued by his sons. Rabbani emphasized that the Afghan cause had enjoyed the undivided attention of the Kingdom's leadership.

He said: We chose the Kingdom as a venue for the meeting so that everyone would be aware that the Afghan mujahidin are powerful and not weak.

In conclusion, Rabbani pointed out that the custodian of the two holy mosques, at his meeting with the Afghan mujahidin delegation, reaffirmed the continuation of the Kingdom's support for the Afghan people until they are granted victory by God, so that they can contribute toward the construction of their country, which has been destroyed by war.

United Arab Emirates

Sea Mine Explosion Wounds Fishermen 14 Dec

JN1512110988 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1000 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 15 Dec (WAKH)—Four Indian fishermen working in the UAE were wounded yesterday and barely escaped death when a sea mine hit their boat in the area of Al-Sha'm in Ra's Al-Khaymah. The mine explosion overturned their boat after its debris scattered in the air and fell into the water.

UAE papers said today that two of the fishermen are in critical condition and were transferred to the hospital following the accident which occurred 45 km off the Ra's al-Khaymah coast. The Coast Guard is investigating the incident.

Yemen Arab Republic

Al-Iryani Addresses UN General Assembly

JN1412202488 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Excerpts] Brother Dr 'Abd al-Karim al-Iryani, deputy prime minister, foreign minister, and Standing Committee member, this evening delivered our country's speech before the UN General Assembly meeting—currently being held in Geneva to discuss the Palestinian question. [passage omitted]

Dr al-Iryani said: In an unprecedented move in the history of our organization, here is the international community—with all its different peoples, races, regimes, and policies—unanimously agreeing to hold this part of the 43d session outside the headquarters of our world organation.

Certainly, the UN General Assembly has regained its international dignity by its historic decision to move with its full body outside its main headquarters, New York, since it settled in it, in order to meet with struggling brother PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat in the middle of the road and to listen to him explain his just cause and make the whole world listen to him repeating the voice of right, justice, and peace.

Dr al-Iryani added: This historic desision was made after the U.S. Administration's disgraceful act of denying brother struggler Yasir 'Arafat an entry visa to the UN Heaquarters, thus violating binding legal texts.

He also said: The presence of the whole international community in this forum and in this place makes us all pleased because the era of arrogance and hegemony have gone and because justice and right will not be blocked by a personal whim or prevented by selfish resolutions.

Dr al-Iryanin also pointed out that the whole world yesterday listened to the historic speech made by the PLO Executive Committee chairman. He urged the international community to help him.

President Appoints New Minister of State

EA0412171288 Sanaa Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 3 Dec 88

["Text" of Decree No 88 for 1988]

[Text] The president of the Republic, having studied the permanent Constitution and Presidential Decree No 41 for 1988 on the formation of the government, in response to the representation of the prime minister, and in the interest of the Republic, has decreed:

Article I. Brother Sadiq Amin Abu Ras is appointed minister of state as secretary general for local councils.

Article II. This decree is effective from the date of issue and will be published in the official gazette.

[Dated] Issued at the headquarters of the Republic in Sanaa on 24 Rabi Thani 1406 a.h. corresponding to December 1988

[Signed] Col 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, president of the Republic, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, and secretary general of the General People's Congress; and 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Abd al-Ghani, prime minister and member of the Standing Committee

Tariq 'Aziz Meets With 'Arafat, Al-Masri, Klibi

JN1312163988 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1558 GMT 13 Dec 88

[Text] Geneva, 13 Dec (INA)—Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, met here today individually with PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, Jordanian Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri, and Arab League Secretary General Chedli Klibi.

They discussed bilateral relations, issues related to the UN General Assembly's debate on the Palestine question, and issues of common concern.

Meets With Perez de Cuellar

JN1412164888 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1600 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Geneva, 14 Dec (INA)—Tariq 'Aziz, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, met here today with UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

They discussed developments in the direct Iraq-Iran negotiations which are being conducted to implement UN Security Council Resolution 598. Tariq 'Aziz affirmed Iraq's serious and sincere desire to establish a comprehensive and durable peace between the two countries. He also referred to the Iranian regime's maneuvers to place obstacles to the establishment of peace—obstacles explained by the foreign minister in a message he sent to the UN secretary general on 11 December.

'Aziz and Javier Perez de Cuellar also reviewed the deliberations currently going on in Geneva on the Palestine question. They also discussed issues of common interest.

The meeting was attended by 'Ismat Kittani, the Iraqi permanent UN representative; Ambassador Eliasson, the secretary general's representative; and a number of his aides.

'Aziz Calls for 'Normal' PLO-U.S. Ties

LD1512121488 Kuwait KUNA in English 1155 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Geneva, Dec 15 (KUNA)—Contacts between the PLO and the U.S. Administration should not be confined to low-level meetings, Iraqi Deputy Premier and Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz said Thursday.

In a brief comment to KUNA, the minister said "We believe the contacts should not be confined to lower-level contacts.

"If there are to be contacts, they should be normal ones, on all possible levels", 'Aziz added.

The minister later went to the International Committee of the Red Cross to discuss the breakdown in the exchange of prisoners-of-war with Iran.

Ramadan Meets U.S. Congressional Delegation

JN1412170288 Baghdad INA in English 1455 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Baghdad, Dec. 14. INA—Taha Yasin Ramadan, member of the Revolution Command Council (RCC) and first deputy premier today conferred here with Mr. Wayne Owens, member of the U.S. Congress External Affairs Committee and the delegation accompanying him.

During the meeting, attended by the U.S. ambassador in Baghdad, bilateral relations were discussed and Mr. Ramadan reviewed Iraq's clear and firm attitude toward the Palestinian issue and support of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and resolutions of the Algiers session of the Palestine National Council including the establishment of the Palestinian state in Palestine.

On another level, Mr. Ramadan also received today the Soviet ambassador in Baghdad and discussed with him the existing friendly relations between the two countries and means of promoting them in the economic fields.

Oil Minister Announces Decision To Cut Exports

JN1412160288 Baghdad INA in English 1530 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Baghdad, Dec 14, INA—Iraq has decided to cut its oil exports by 90,000 b/d [barrels per day] as from January 1, 1989 in compliance with its new OPEC quota, according to Oil Minister 'Isam 'Abd al-Rahim al-Jalabi.

Al-Jalabi said Wednesday that Iraq would stop exporting 65.000 b/d by trucks through the Jordanian Red Sea port of Al-'Aqabah and 25.000 b/d through Turkey.

The move, he said was in affirmation of Iraq's full abiding by its new quota of 2.64 million b/d and with its principled stand in supporting the price structure and stabilizing the oil market in compliance with the decisions adopted by the recent OPEC ministerial conference.

Mr. al-Jalabi said that by this decision, Iraq which always sought to protect OPEC's unity and abided by its decisions in a manner safeguarding its legitimate rights, reasserts its positive stand in abiding by its production quota.

Iraq, he concluded hopes that all OPEC member states would abide by their quotas for the interest of strengthening the organization's role and the interests of its member countries.

Makes Statement to London Paper

PM0912105988 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 8 Dec 88 p 1-2

[Zaki Musa report: "Oil Minister to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Prices Will Remain Stable Until End of 1989"]

[Excerpts] London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Iraqi Oil Minister 'Isam al-Jalabi has announced that the recent OPEC agreement in Vienna includes strong points which constitute a historic turn for the organization similar to that which was achieved 5 years ago. The agreement has settled many of the outstanding problems such as the issue of equal Iraqi and Iranian quotas and the basic tariffs relating to production. He said that the prices will remain stable at $18 a barrel until the end of 1989.

In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT on the eve of his departure from the British capital on his way to Baghdad after taking part in an economic seminar on the future of oil, Al-Jalabi said that the recent agreement does not mean there are no negative aspects, nor does it mean that the organization has no problems. In fact, we can say that among the positive points of the agreement is the fact that because it settles many issues it will be possible to concentrate on other points in the future.

The Iraqi oil minister said that the most important problem now facing the organization is finding a sound means acceptable to all parties to control the member states' production, thus guaranteeing full commitment, because without the member states' full commitment any agreement would fail. [passage omitted]

Al-Jalabi talked about the agreed Iraqi quota, namely 2,640,000 barrels a day, as well as Iraq's losses as a result of the slump in oil prices. He said: The drop in oil prices has affected some development projects, but not to the extent of destroying the Iraqi economy. On the contrary, the Iraqi economy has emerged from the war in a good position. International finance organizations have shown great confidence in it.

This has been clear through the extensive activities since the cease-fire was adopted, as many companies and establishments have begun to deal with Iraq. We hope that stability will be restored to oil markets. We also hope that oil prices will be restored to the levels decided by OPEC so that the wheel of development and building will continue to run in the way we want.

As to whether the end of the war will stop work on oil pipelines across other states, Al-Jalabi said: The projects we decided to proceed with during the war are now either completed or about to be so. We have completed all the projects that concern the expansion of the export capacity via Turkey. As for the main project, which includes the second stage of the oil pipeline across Saudi territory, it is now being carried out as scheduled according to the contracts concluded with the contractors. It will be completed next September, as scheduled.

He added: We had no projects via Jordan, and what we will do now is repair Iraqi seaports on the Arabian Gulf.

As to whether efforts are being made to resume pumping oil across Syrian territory, the Iraqi minister said: We have dropped this from our considerations and we have no intention of reconsidering that decision.

Reportage on Visit of Brazilian Commerce Minister

Arrives 10 Dec

JN1012173488 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1635 GMT 10 Dec 88

[Text] Baghdad, 10 Dec (INA)—Roberto Cardoso Alves, Brazilian minister of industry and commerce, arrived in Baghdad this evening at the head of an economic and trade delegation. During the visit, which will last several days, Roberto will lead the Brazilian side to the meetings of the joint Iraqi-Brazilian committee for economic, trade, scientific, and technical cooperation, which will begin its work at the ministerial level the day after tomorrow, Monday.

In a statement to INA, the Brazilian minister expressed happines over being in Iraq and said the visit is a precious opportunity for him to meet with officials in the trade sector to promote bilateral relations and increase cooperation in trade, the economy, and exchanges of commodities between the two friendly countries. The Brazilian minister was received at the airport by Trade Minister Muhammad Mahdi Salih and the Brazilian ambassador in Baghdad.

Attends Joint Committee Meetings

JN1112185888 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 11 Dec 88

[Text] The meetings of the seventh session of the joint Iraqi-Brazilian committee for economic, trade, and technical cooperation between the two countries began at the Trade Ministry today. The Iraqi side was headed by Trade Minister Muhammad Mahdi Salih; the Brazilian side was headed by Industry and Commerce Minister Roberto Cardoso Alves. The committee will discuss what was implemented from the minutes of the sixth session, which was held in Brasilia in 1987, as well as the 1989 trade exchange plan between the two countries.

The Iraqi side comprised representatives of the Ministry of Transport and Communications, the Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of Industry and Military Industrialization, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific

Research, the Ministry of Oil, the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, the Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction, the Ministry of trade, the Ministry of Finance, and the Central Bank. The Brazilian side comrised representatives of a number of Brazilian ministries.

Meets With Industry Minister

JN1212143988 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1330 GMT 12 Dec 88

[Text] Baghdad, 12 Dec (INA)—Husayn Kamil Hasan, industry and military industrialization minister, today met with Roberto Cardoso Alves, Brazilian industry and commerce minister. They discussed ways to promote industrial cooperation between the two friendly countries.

Also during the meeting, attended by the under secretaries of the Ministry of Industry and Military Industrialization, the Iraqi and Brazilian ministers expressed satisfaction with the level of bilateral relations and stressed a joint desire to enhance them in various fields.

Conveys Message to President

JN1212172688 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 12 Dec 88

[Text] President leader Saddam Husayn has received a written message from Brazilian President Jose Sarney on the developed relations between the two friendly countries. Roberto Cardoso Alves, Brazilian industry and commerce minister and Brazilian President Jose Sarney's personal envoy to his excellency, conveyed the message when President leader Saddam Husayn received him. Attending the meeting were Trade Minister Muhammad Mahdi Salih, the president's secretary, and the Brazilian ambassador in Baghdad.

Discusses Ties With Hammadi

JN1212172988 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 12 Dec 88

[Text] Sa'dun Hammadi, minister of state for foreign affairs, today met with Roberto Cardoso Alves, Brazilian industry and trade minister, and the delegation accompanying him. They discussed ways to enhance relations of cooperation and friendship between the two countries. The Foreign Ministry under secretary and the Brazilian ambassador in Baghdad attended the meeting.

Confers With Ramadan

JN1312175288 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1640 GMT 13 Dec 88

[Text] Baghdad, 13 Dec (INA)—Taha Yasin Ramadan, RCC member and first deputy prime minister, met here today with Roberto Cardoso Alves, Brazilian industry and commerce minister, and his accompanying delegation.

The ties between the two friendly countries were discussed, with both parties expressing satisfaction with their developed relations and emphasizing the desire to find new prospects to help expand trade and economic cooperation between the two countries.

Mr Ramadan stressed that the Iraqi economy will witness distinguished development in the coming stage.

Mr Alves praised the current development in Iraq and expressed the Brazilian institutions' readiness to redouble trade and economic activities in Iraq.

Sudanese Armed Forces Commander Arrives 13 Dec

JN1312151588 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1330 GMT 13 Dec 88

[Text] Baghdad, 13 DEC (INA)—Staff Lieutenant General Fathi Ahmad 'Ali, commander in chief of the Sudanese Armed Forces arrived here today heading a delegation on a several-day visit to Iraq

He was received by Staff Gen 'Adnan Khayrallah, deputy commander in chief of the Armed Forces and minister of defense, and a number of senior Iraqi Armed Forces officers.

Meets With Khayrallah

JN1412115888 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1100 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Baghdad, 14 Dec (INA)—Staff Gen 'Adnan Khayrallah, deputy commander in chief of the Armed Forces and defense minister, received Staff Gen Fathi Ahmad 'Ali, commander in chief of the Sudanese Armed Forces, here today.

The two sides discussed means of finding new fields of cooperation between the Armed Forces in the two fraternal countries in order to serve the Arab nation.

On behalf of the Sudanese Armed Forces, Staff Gen Fathi Ahmad 'Ali extended congratulations on Iraq's victory and serious efforts to achieve a just and lasting peace. He also reiterated thanks to Iraq for its fraternal pan-Arab stands toward Sudan.

Staff Gen Fathi Ahmad arrived here yesterday on a several-day visit to Iraq.

Transport Minister Leaves for Cairo Meetings

JN1112130788 Baghdad INA in English 1055 GMT 11 Dec 88

[Text] Baghdad, Dec. 11, INA—Mr Muhammad Hamzah, Iraqi minister of transport and communications this morning flew to Cairo to attend the ministerial meeting of the General Assembly of the Arab Bridge Maritime Company, due there tomorrow.

The Iraqi minister told (INA) before departure that the meeting would adopt several resolutions on action strategy of the Arab Company for water and overland transport. This strategy aimed at providing services to the Company's Arab member countries, namely: Iraq, Egypt and Jordan, in the fields of water transport and overland transport and linking eastern part of the Arab homeland with the Arab Maghreb, the minister mentioned.

AL-JUMHURIYAH Cited on Executions in Iran

JN1412110988 Baghdad INA in English 1030 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Baghdad, Dec. 14, INA—The Iraqi daily AL-JUMHURIYAH said that the Iranian regime is carrying out an internal war against the Iranian peoples and the opposition forces.

In a commentary here today the newspaper said that the statistics that appeared in a statement distributed by the Iranian students in a European capital said that 12 thousand Iranian citizens had been executed by the regime since last August. [sentence as received] The paper said that the statistics means that the Iranian authorities execute 3000 citizens every month as a result of the opposition of these citizens to the regime.

AL-JUMHURIYAH daily added that daily massacres are carried out in Iran against the Iranian citizens who live the worst tragedy in this century.

The daily mentioned examples such as the occupation by the Iranian opposition groups of Madrid office of the Iranian Airways. It said that this operation was carried out on the same day of the 40th anniversary of the announcement of the universal human rights charter.

Reaction to U.S. Decision on PLO Dialogue

Shamir's Office States 'Regret'

TA1512052388 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] The Prime Minister's Office has expressed regret over the U.S. Administration's decision. It announced that the U.S. stand will not bring peace.

Our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami has learned that Israel will not change its policy toward the PLO, nor will it negotiate with that organization. The statement further says that Israel believes the United States will learn very soon what the true face of the PLO is.

Shamir 'Disappointed'

TA1512160388 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Report by political correspondent 'Oz Frankel]

[Excerpts] Secretary of State George Shultz is trying to calm us down, and it is not at all certain that he is having much success. He wrote to Shamir and Peres: I know how sensitive the issue is for you and for the people in Israel. [passage omitted]

The conversation between Thomas Pickering and Yitzhaq Shamir on the contents of the Shultz message was termed by Shamir aides as difficult and unpleasant. Shamir is concerned and disappointed. He believes the Americans went a long way to please 'Arafat without any justification. The Prime Minister's Office is concerned about a positive reaction by leading U.S. Jewish figures to talks with the PLO.

Jewish public figures not usually identified with left-wing views, such as Morris Abram and Morris Foxman, view it as the price Israel is paying for promises to amend the Who Is a Jew issue.

Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres also believes that the U.S. move came too early, but explained to Thomas Pickering that he is not concerned about relations between the two countries. He takes seriously the promises Shultz relayed to Jerusalem.

The two offices are spending a lot of time today explaining the Israeli position. Peres met the foreign press and tried to present them with Israeli alternatives. Yosi Ben-Aharon, the director general of the Prime Minister's Office, also held a news conference. Jerusalem is slowly digesting the night's events, checking the formulations, and the declarations. The feeling here is that the outgoing U.S. Administration made a small discount to Yasir 'Arafat—an end of season discount, if you will—thereby saving the incoming administration from having to make a decision on an especially problematic issue.

Foreign Ministry Reacts

TA1512112188 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1100 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Excerpt] The Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem says that the U.S. decision to launch a dialogue with the PLO has Israel worried because Washington attaches too much importance to the recent month's rhetoric uttered by the PLO; rhetoric still untested by reality.

The Foreign Ministry further says that it should be remembered that the PLO's verbiage is accompanied by a new demand for a recognition of an independent Palestinian state. Israel views the very existence of this demand as a threat to its security, which it cannot ignore. Israel will object to a Palestinian state and will not cease its efforts to bring about a true peace in the region. [passage omitted]

May Seek U.S. Clarifications

TA1512102488 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1000 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz has sent messages to Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir and Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres, explaining Washington's decision to launch a dialogue with the PLO. Our political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami reports that U.S. Ambassador in Israel Thomas Pickering delivered the messages to the offices of Mr Shamir and Mr Peres. The ambassador was requested to relay the two ministers' reactions to Washington.

The Prime Minister's Office is considering sending a messenger to Washington to receive clarifications and voice the Prime Minister's Office's objection to the U.S. decision. Another task of the messenger would be to prevent leaving the U.S. media open to PLO propaganda.

Ambassador Arad, MK's Comment

TA1512053788 Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] In Washington, Israel's Ambassador to the United States Moshe Arad called the U.S. announcement a blow to Israel, adding that the PLO could not be a partner in negotiations. Nevertheless, he said, Washington-Jerusalem relations will not be damaged by this dramatic development. [Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 0500 GMT on 15 December adds that Arad said that "the administration's decision could lead to stepped up violence in the region" and that "Israel is disappointed with the administration's policy and regrets the change in the U.S. position."]

Back in Israel, Likud Knesset Member [MK] Binyamin Begin rejected 'Arafat's statement last night, saying the PLO still sees no room for a Jewish state and still adheres to its gradual plan of eliminating Israel.

On the other hand, Citizens Rights Movement MK Ran Kohen said the American move will be successful in advancing the peace process, and it is now up to Israel to change its policy. [passage omitted]

Peres: 'Not a Happy Ending'

TA1512063188 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0505 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Telephone interview with Shim'on Peres, vice prime minister and foreign minister, by political correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami and Shalom Qital—live]

[Text] [Qital] Good Morning, Mr Shim'on Peres.

[Peres] Good morning.

[Qital] What do you say about the statement by your colleague George Shultz?

[Peres] The Americans had refused to acknowledge 'Arafat's announcement, with the terrorism issue being one of the reasons for this. In his speech in Geneva, 'Arafat said that he condemns terrorism, but does not undertake to stop it. Yesterday, to all appearances, he did undertake to stop it. I believe that any Molotov cocktail thrown in the territories today annuls that entire commitment. The problem does not lie only in formulations; there is also the problem of actual situations.

At the same time, it must not be denied that a very serious change has taken place in the political development of the region and in the position of our policy. The change is not in 'Arafat; we know him well. The change is in Washington, and there is no use hiding that. It is a sad day for all of us. Sadness, however, is not a policy. We cannot say that from now on our policy will be one of sadness or regret. We must come out with a political initiative in response to the new situation. I do not now believe—nor did I ever: neither before, during, or after the elections—in the possibility of maintaining the status quo.

Reality is not a frozen process. We are not the only ones who exist and breathe in this region. A great number of forces are gathering in front of us, and unless we come out with a convincing initiative of our own, capable of winning back the support of friends in many places, we will find ourselves under a heavy political blockade. All this cannot be changed with one stroke of the hand. The situation is very grave and demands a most concentrated effort of thought, political activity, and propaganda. We must provide an appropriate answer to the new situation.

[Ben-'Ami] Mr Peres, is there not cause for concern in the fact that this decision—which in fact changes the 1975 memorandum of understanding—was made by the present administration, which had been defined by all as the best and most friendly to Israel? Does it not make you want to try to hold on to the Foreign Ministry in order to act on behalf of the political plan you have mentioned?

[Peres] This is undoubtedly not a happy ending [last two words in English] to our relations, although it in no way obscures the support they have given us so far. I do not wish, God forbid, to make slight of all the manifestations of friendship and support we have had so far. Not only is it not a happy ending, but it also marks a new beginning [last two words in English], because there is a new administration. It must be remembered that Mr Shultz's announcement is shared by President-elect Bush. In Europe, too, there are new stands.

I must tell you, this really demands that we stop and think about what is to be done, because what is being proposed these days is not a joint government but a divided government. This cannot be. The Labor Party will certainly not be party to any idea that aims at preserving the status quo. There are possibilities for appropriate new initiatives. We must propose an alternative to the PLO. I think the only alternative we can propose that can be seriously accepted is an elected leadership in the territories.

It is necessary to create the required conditions to enable the election of such a leadership. Such a leadership, however, can be elected only after gunfire is stopped. The problem with regard to 'Arafat is not whether he represents the residents of the territories. This is not the only issue. The question is: Does he control them? Is his word any good?

[Qital] Mr Peres, I have noticed that in discussing initiatives both now and in the Knesset, you have not mentioned that term you used so often during the past year: the international conference.

[Peres] Listen, my dear friend. Those who opposed Jordan and the idea of an international conference paved the way for the PLO. Now Mr Shultz has announced direct negotiations with the PLO. Is that any better?

I did not speak of the conference incessantly before, either, but pushing Jordan out of the picture was a fatal mistake. I do not mean today; I mean in the past, if you can still remember that. I said then that those who reject Jordanian participation in the process are paving the way for the PLO. The writing was on every wall, and only a blind man could have failed to see it.

[Ben-'Ami] Mr Peres, in this new situation of rapprochement between the PLO and Washington, can you see any way for a rapprochement between the Likud and the Alignment, in order to formulate a new Israeli policy?

[Peres] I do not know. There are many in the Likud who believe that the Alignment now shares the Likud views. Nothing like that has happened. The talks are not about

a Likud government or a Likud policy. If a broad-based government is formed, it will be based on the concepts of both parties, because the problem is so serious that it is beyond any question of party prestige. We must provide a serious answer to the new situation, which is a cause for much concern and anxiety in Israel. Undoubtedly, this issue must be clarified. We cannot turn away or bury our heads in the sand and say that nothing has happened. Something has happened, and we must provide an appropriate answer.

[Qital] Thank you very much, Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres.

[Peres] Thank you.

Arens: No 'Substantive' Change

TA1512074388 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0505 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Telephone interview with Minister Without Portfolio Moshe Arens by Shalom Qital and 'Oded Ben-'Ami—live]

[Text] [Qital] We have Minister Arens on the line. Good morning, Professor Arens.

[Arens] Good morning.

[Qital] A few minutes ago, Shim'on Peres said that this is a sad day, but that sadness is not a policy. What, then, is the policy you are going to recommend now?

[Arens] First of all, I would like to say that the U.S. readiness to launch a dialogue with PLO representatives is an issue that the United States has been debating for some 20 years now, with ups and downs. Naturally, we regret the present decision to launch such a dialogue. It looks almost ridiculous to us, the way Yasir 'Arafat, like an obedient pupil, had to repeat certain words until he finally got them right, after which a decision was made to launch a dialogue with him.

I believe, however, that although this change is negative, we must not think in terms of a substantive change in relations between Israel and the United States. These are very good relations, very close, and I am positive they will continue to be so.

We have to launch an information campaign in the United States to explain—not for the first time—that what is important with regard to 'Arafat and the PLO is not what he was taught to say, but what he actually does. Every Israeli knows precisely what he does.

[Ben-'Ami] Mr Arens, this information campaign was at its peak just now around the special session in Geneva. The winner, however, was 'Arafat. I would like to ask you, as a person who is very familiar with both the present and future U.S. administrations: Is it true that one Molotov cocktail thrown in the territories can make the U.S. Administration backtrack from its decision? Can the United States change its decision?

[Arens] I do not know whether one Molotov cocktail will do that, but I think reality will. Unfortunately, we are familiar with this reality. If there is anyone in the United States nowadays who believes that the PLO has stopped terror and will not dabble in it anymore, I think they will realize their error very soon.

[Qital] Minister Arens, you have explained what Israel should do about its relations with the United States. What should it do about its relations with the Arab world now? Shim'on Peres, for instance, spoke of a political initiative.

[Arens] I do not think we need a political initiative only now. The State of Israel had to deal with political initiatives in the past and will have to do so in the future.

[Ben-'Ami] Can you draw one? Can you, for instance, formulate an initiative based on the proposal to try to set up an Arab representation in the territories?

[Arens] I do not think this is the time to go into detail, and I am sorry Mr Peres did so. We are now in the process of negotiating with the Alignment; we are probing the possibility of formulating joint guidelines and establishing a joint government. I do not think the dialogue between me and Mr Peres should be conducted via the radio, with all due respect to you. Our dialogue is conducted through the coalition talks.

[Qital] Yes, that is obvious, but I wanted to ask a question of principle, in addition to 'Oded's question: Can you, the Likud, together with the Alignment, formulate a plan that would represent a midline between the platforms of your two parties?

[Arens] I think the negotiations of the past few days have proved that this is possible to achieve. To a great extent, the past differences revolved around procedures rather than substance. I think, therefore, that if each side shows good will and makes an effort, there is a good chance we can reach a common ground that would enable us to establish a broad-based government. The next few days will show whether this is true.

[Qital] Minister Arens, thank you very much.

[Arens] Thank you.

UN Ambassador Bein Comments

TA1512091088 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Telephone interview with Yohanan Bein, ambassador to the United Nations, by Yitzhaq Ro'e and Ya'el Dayan—live]

[Text] [Ro'e] Good morning, Ambassador Bein.

[Bein] Good morning.

[Ro'e] Have you failed? Was it at all possible to succeed in this arena?

[Bein] I do not think there is a question of failure here. I think the United States saw that the PLO had uttered the words it wanted to hear in order to start a dialogue aimed at determining whether the PLO is capable of being a partner to peace negotiations.

[Dayan] In an immediate reaction to the U.S. announcement yesterday, you said: This is a blow to Israel. Is this a blow to which it will be difficult to respond?

[Bein] I did not react to the U.S. announcement yesterday, and I said nothing of the kind.

[Dayan] These are the words you were quoted as having said.

[Bein] I did not say them.

[Dayan] Well, you now have an opportunity to set the record straight.

[Bein] I did not say them.

[Ro'e] Is it still possible for us to get the United States back on the track which, at least from the Israeli Government's point of view, seems to be the right and appropriate one—that is: support for the Israeli Government's present policy?

[Bein] At 0300 last night, when the entire staff of the Israeli delegation was still hard at work in our offices here, we received a telephone call from a State Department adviser, who is a member of the U.S. delegation. He advised us of Secretary Shultz' decision, saying that the U.S. delegation here had no prior knowledge of the decision and that the motives behind it are not entirely clear to them.

They heard 'Arafat's announcement at the news conference, and they did not think there was any change from his former statements. He added that the ties of friendship uniting us will remain steadfast and that the working relationship between the U.S. and Israeli delegations and between our two countries is as good as ever, because the same principles and the same pursuit of justice unite us.

[Dayan] Mr Bein, did your American colleague say that he was surprised, that he did not know of Washington's intention to make such an announcement? After all, this is the result of contacts started behind the scenes, through Swedish and other mediation, days or weeks ago. Were you taken by surprise?

[Bein] I would not say we were taken by surprise. We feared that such a move is about to take place because there were constant rumors of behind-the-scene contacts assisted by Sweden. I cannot confirm that this was really the case. What I can confirm is that 'Arafat made remarks in which it is possible to perceive a change, if you want to perceive one. We do not perceive any central change in 'Arafat's remarks, because they focus on Resolution 181—the establishment of a Palestinian state—as the first step, while he presents negotiations on the basis of 242 and 338 as a basis for negotiations after the establishment of that state, which means negotiations between the future Palestinian state they expect to be established and Israel.

In fact, the idea is just the opposite. Resolution 242 is the model for conducting negotiations without preconditions and for achieving the goals we are all interested in. The goals have to be presented at the negotiations, and not be the precondition for them.

[Ro'e] Ambassador Yohanan Bein, our representative to the United Nations, thank you very much.

[Bein] Thank you.

Party Leaders, MK's React

TA1512073288 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0600 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Minister Zvulun Hammer of the National Religious Party has expressed sorrow over the U.S. decision. He believes this is a grave, one-sided decision which might isolate Israel in the fight for its life. Minister Hammer believes the situation will require national unity and responsibility. [Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 0600 GMT on 15 December adds that Hammer said "words coming from the PLO's mouth will not be sufficient to launch a process. The PLO wants to settle on our land. Words, therefore, cannot prove Palestinian readiness to live in peace."]

Knesset Member [MK] Refa'el Eytan of Tzomet believes that Washington's decision expresses Israel's inability to enforce law and order in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza. It stems from the freeze in the settlement momentum and from the fact that Israeli sovereignty has not been imposed on these areas.

Tehiya MK Ge'ula Kohen says that the freeze in the settlement drive invited the U.S. decision to recognize the PLO. She believes that a major settlement momentum should be launched in the territories and that real moves against the uprising should be launched. [Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 0600 GMT on 15 December adds that MK Kohen said "the outcome was predictable and unavoidable. Israel cannot blame the United States without also blaming itself. Israel is to be faulted

for inviting the move by freezing the settlement movement, by handling the uprising poorly, and by failing to impose its sovereignty over Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza, thereby leaving a political vacuum."]

The Peace Now Movement has called on the Cabinet to invite the PLO to negotiations, saying that it must not wait for international or U.S. pressure and must immediately stop all the settlement activity in the territories.

MK Amnon Rubinstein of Shinuy urges the Cabinet to declare that it will begin contacts with the PLO if that organization ceases acts of hostility and terrorism. [Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 0600 GMT on 15 December reports that Rubinstein believes "Israel can no longer ignore the international reality and pursue the policy of naysaying. The Cabinet must declare that if there is indeed an absolute cessation of acts of hostility and terrorism, it will begin contacts."]

Further Response of Parties

TA1512074288 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] MAPAM's Ya'ir Tzaban told us this morning that if Israel wants to avoid serious isolation in the international arena and does not want to remain alone against the entire world, it has no choice but to follow in the Americans' footsteps and agree to negotiations with the PLO. This will also put the seriousness of 'Arafat's proposals and intentions to the test.

Yosi Sarid used rather poetic language this morning, saying: This is the day we have been hoping and praying for for a long time. We knew it would come, no matter how long we had to wait for it. We now have peace in the Middle East, he said. For the first time in our history, peace is within arm's reach. The United States must now bring Israel and the PLO to the negotiating table, whether we like it or not.

HADASH [Democratic Front for Peace and Equality] Knesset Member [MK] Me'ir Wilner said: The U.S. announcement constitutes an important step toward promoting peace. Shamir and Peres have failed to take notice of what is happening right under their noses in the occupied territories and cannot now see what is happening in the world. Israel should accept the notion of two states for two nations.

Moledet's Rehav'am Ze'evi, on the other hand, said: The U.S. attitude toward the PLO and its chairman is wrong. 'Arafat has always been and continues to be a murderer. With all due respect to the Americans, we must determine our fate alone. The Government of Israel should talk to the Americans openly and firmly and clarify our right over all of Eretz Yisra'el.

MK 'Abd al-Wahab Darawshah expressed support for the recognition, saying: The United States is correcting the historic mistake it made regarding the Palestinian people. This makes it incumbent upon Israel to emerge from its cocoon and implement a different policy.

Avraham Ravitz from Degel Hatora said: We need to see actual proof to believe that the Palestinians indeed want to live with us. Their actions can bring them closer or do the opposite. Now more than ever before there is no question that Israel needs a broad-based government.

Call for Coalition Reassessment

TA1512124588 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Labor Party Secretary 'Uzi Bar'am says that although the PLO is not a partner to a dialogue at this time, it may be one in the future. Our correspondent Razi Barqay reports that Bar'am leveled criticism at the Israeli Cabinet's reactions to 'Arafat's remarks, pointing out that Israel must not isolate itself or create the image that it is refusing to make peace. 'Uzi Bar'am added that the latest political development constitutes further proof that the Labor Party must not join a Likud-led government.

Minister 'Ezer Weizman believes that 'Arafat's comments in Geneva herald the beginning of a new era. Israel should therefore regard him as a partner to negotiations. Interviewed on our midday newsreel, Weizman said that this is a sad day, but the process may have a happy ending. He took issue with those who fear that an agreement with the PLO might lead to the deployment of tanks in Judaea and Samaria.

He pointed out that this did not happen along our borders with the other Arab countries, and it does not stand to reason that this will happen in the territories, mainly because Israel enjoys military and aviation superiority.

Minister Weizman added that the situation demands that the decision to join a broad-based government be reconsidered. Accordingly, he said, this morning he recommended that Minister Peres summon the Alignment's ministerial forum to reassess the situation.

Arabs Take 'Positive' View

TA1512122288 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1200 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] The chairman of the Committee of Arab Local Councils has called on the government to stop pursuing the policy of rejecting negotiations with the PLO. In a talk with our correspondent Yo'el Dar, Chairman Ibrahim Nimr al-Husayn said that the Arab residents of the Galilee, the Triangle, and the Negev take a positive view of the U.S. resolution and hope the Cabinet will also see the advantages this development entails.

Sinyurah: 'Uprising' To Continue

TA1512115488 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1105 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Report by Arye Gus]

[Excerpt] The news of the U.S. decision spread with lightning speed throughout the territories. The general reaction so far has been one of satisfaction, pleasure, and achievement.

AL-FAJR editor Hanna Sinyurah says that the 1-year intifada paved the way for this situation. This is a politically historic event, and Hanna Sinyurah hopes that it will pave the way for a dialogue between the PLO and Israel. What is required now are reciprocal gestures. Israel could, for instance, stop deportations and administrative detentions, close down the detention camps, and so on. What about the uprising? He believes that the expected dialogue will not affect the uprising, although it will stress the need for nonviolent activities.

[Begin Sinyurah recording in English] The intifada [uprising] will continue as a protest movement against continued occupation. It will, however, try to be a sort of an intifada without the spilling of blood, without the shedding of blood, without undue violence. [end recording] [passage omitted]

'Elation' Over U.S. Decision

TA1512082088 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Residents of the territories greeted Shultz' announcement with predictable unconcealed elation. They are now waiting for a positive Israeli reaction. The general strike in Gaza scheduled for today was canceled. Our correspondents 'Ezra Yanuv and 'Eran Ben-Porat have gathered some reactions in the territories:

[Begin recording] [Ben Porat] The U.S. announcement is excellent news for us, said AL-FAJR editor Hanna Sinyurah, summing up the Palestinian feelings in one sentence. The intifada [uprising] opened the door for a peace process in the entire region based on peaceful coexistence, he added.

Sa'id Kan'an, a dignitary from Nabulus, said yesterday that the credibility of the United States is being tested now. Today he says: The United States has passed the credibility test.

[Kan'an—in English] It is a 180 degree turn in the American policy. Mr Shultz himself, who denied granting Mr 'Arafat a visa to the United States, himself yesterday made a press conference in Washington and said: We are ready to make a dialogue with the PLO. So again the credibility of the United States now is, you know, at a high degree. We welcome this new development and, as I told you, we hope that it will lead to real peace in the area.

I know that it is very difficult for the Israeli politicians to accept negotiating with the PLO itself, but I can assure you now that the PLO is no more the old PLO that you think of. Now they are calling for peace, endeavoring for peace, and want to live in security with the Israeli state itself.

[Ben-Porat] Residents of the Gaza Strip yesterday waited impatiently for 'Arafat's news conference, hoping that afterward the Americans would recognize the PLO. Many were glued to their radios throughout the night.

This morning, many residents expressed their elation at the U.S. decision. We want to solve our problem, they said. In the wake of the decision, the Gaza Strip decided not to hold the strike scheduled for today.

Residents have also given vent to criticism of Israel, saying: What else does Israel want? To humiliate the Palestinians? This is the time for negotiations. 'Arafat has already recognized you twice. [end recording]

Peres Addresses Knesset on 'Arafat Speech

TA1412133888 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1150 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Address by Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres to the Knesset, within the framework of a scheduled House debate on PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat's UN General Assembly speech in Geneva on 13 December—live;]

[Text] Mr Speaker, I heard today's Knesset debate. I believe everyone is concerned, but the truth is that one must be careful not to create the impression that the whole issue is a war of words between 'Arafat and the State of Israel. When Knesset Member Eliyahu Ben-Elisar says that he does not stutter, that is commendable, but that will not solve many problems. Incidentally, the greatest Jew in all our history was speech impaired. I do not think, though, that this in any way impeded his ability.

The problem is not only what 'Arafat says or what we say; the problem is not only one of words, it is what lies behind them. Let us admit that in all honesty we are in the midst of an extremely complex situation because we are not just engaged in a verbal duel with 'Arafat; we are also engaged in a duel over the U.S. positions. There is no point denying this. The struggle is also over Europe's positions, and there is no point denying this, either. This outcome is not rigged in advance in our favor. I wish I could say I thought the whole problem boiled down to what we shall say, to whether or not we will hem and haw.

Everything boils down to what the Israelis will say, and this worries me because there are constant accusations: Why do you say this and why do you say that? If we all spoke as one, would the problem then disappear? The problem can likewise not boil down to what the United States or Europe will say. The problem really boils down to how all of us will get out of the set of wars which has accompanied us for 40 years; how we can secure peace for ourselves and our children; and how to guarantee more than just our right over Eretz Yisra'el, and ensure our right to live in Eretz Yisra'el in peace as a Jewish majority. These are the real problems.

What happened yesterday in Geneva is an event. One must differentiate between the event and the process, and the two are not the same. As an event, it was disappointing. As a process, it is a complex one. As far as the event is concerned, I would say that 'Arafat's address in Geneva yesterday was at best a rhetorical success and in the least a political failure. Instead of contending with the problems seriously, he preferred to skirt them, although he frequently used the word peace, and I welcome this. Peace is not a dirty word, but neither is it merely a descriptive term.

It either becomes a reality or it does not. Words alone will not feather his nest. It is consequently no wonder that the animated suspense in Washington yesterday in anticipation of the speech quickly turned into instant disappointment after it was read. It was a promise that was not fulfilled, and not for the first time, either. The decision that was expected was not made.

What is the cause for this disappointment? I must refer also to the content of the speech. In fact, the Americans and not us—and let me emphasize here that although this followed talks with us, the United States in 1975 with Henry Kissinger as secretary of state announced that it will present three conditions. This was made known to us, although we never joined this policy or stated that if these three conditions are met everything else will fall into its place naturally—this time, at any rate, the United States reiterated its three conditions, and apparently asked 'Arafat to state things clearly and explicitly.

First, with regard to Resolutions 242 and 338, he should state unequivocally that he accepts them as the basis for negotiations. Instead, 'Arafat pulled a stunt. He said that 242 and 338 will constitute the framework for an international conference, in which he hopes a Palestinian state will also be decided upon. In his speech in Geneva yesterday, 'Arafat voiced a very interesting complaint about the United States, saying: You adopted only half of Resolution 181, the part regarding the establishment of the Jewish state. You failed, however, to adopt the second half, which refers to the establishment of a Palestinian state.

But he is forgetting his history. Those who refused to accept Resolution 181 with respect to the establishment of a Palestinian state were not the United States but the Arab side, the Palestinian side. The refusal was not only oral, it was made with spears and blood and war. He cannot today play dumb and describe the graveyard they created as a delivery ward that is still fresh in everyone's mind. Who are they complaining about here?

The difference between 181 and 242 is historic, not textual. Rabbi Yehuda Halevi [Middle Ages poet and Jewish philosopher in the Spanish diaspora] said that the difference between the God of the gentiles and that of the Jews is in that the former is the God of [word indistinct] while the latter is the God of history.

Resolution 181 was intended to correct the situation that prevailed in 1947, both insofar as we were concerned as well as from the point of view of the whole world and the Arabs. The most pressing thing for us were the refugees who survived the horrible holocaust that befell our nation in Europe. Even now there are two things I cannot understand: How it was possible to exterminate 6 million Jews, including 2 million children; and how, after that holocaust, the gates of Palestine were shut and these bare skeletons that were left were refused the chance to reach a haven.

When I think about it today calmly, I just cannot comprehend it. This is beyond any logic. This was what prompted the late David Ben-Gurion to reach the Biltmore plan [resolution adopted by the World Zionist Movement in 1942 at the Biltmore Hotel in New York to combat the British Mandate's "White Paper" which limited the number of permits for Jews to settle in Palestine and explicitly demanded the establishment of a Jewish state in Eretz Yisra'el]. Resolution 242, on the other hand, purports to resolve a different state of affairs, the situation that was created after the 6-day war in 1967.

It came after three wars, after the Arabs attacked us in 1948 and refused to accept Resolution 181; following all the fedayeen attacks on the eve of the 1956 Sinai Campaign and the siege on the Straits of Tiran; and after, in defiance of [then Prime Minister] Levi Eshkol's advice, Husayn joined the war against us. It reflected not only a geographic and demographic state of affairs, but also a political situation. Most of the nations of the world recognized that after three wars, the State of Israel deserved to have secure borders.

Although Israel was required to withdraw from territories it conquered in the war, it was not required to withdraw from all of them, and it was noted that Israel has a right to security. How can anyone compare and combine 181 and 242? The two are totally different matters. The one replaces the other, it is not meant to be an addendum to it.

I am talking seriously, and am not minimizing anything. 'Arafat ran away not because he does not understand, but because instead of addressing the situation, he referred to the situation that exists in his court, inside his organization. Rather than making his organization acknowledge the state of affairs that exists here, he wanted the situation here to be adjusted in a manner that would resolve all his problems within the PLO.

Secondly, Knesset members, [MK's] and I say this just as seriously: With regard to terrorism, this time the United States also learned its lesson and told 'Arafat two things. First, that he should not only condemn terrorism and violence, but that he should undertake not to engage in them. That is because the PLO has learned that it is easier to condemn than to stop them. 'Arafat very quickly learned to condemn terrorism, but at the same time employ it under a different heading.

This time the United States told him: With all due respect, it is not sufficient to condemn. You must in effect cease all these activities. 'Arafat again pulled the same trick. He said that he condemns terrorism in all its manifestations, but left the door open in two areas: first, opposition to conquest—which is how he describes the situation in Judaea and Samaria; and second by calling the intifada [uprising] a democratic and enlightened phenomenon. Is it all that enlightened to hurl a Molotov cocktail and kill a woman and her three children? Is that democratic, for either the Arabs or for us?

I have heard all his charges regarding the territories. We have occupied the territories 21 years. Were there no wonderful periods in the territories? If there is quiet, if there are no murders and no one shoots, there is no reaction. We do not advocate a policy of worsening the situation in the territories. We have a policy of security in the territories. Here, too... [interrupted by indistinct heckling by MK 'Abd al-Wahab Darawshah]

Excuse me, what are you saying: That we got up one morning and conquered these areas? You must acknowledge the facts and the truth, even in the Knesset, whether you like it or not. What did Husayn attack us in Judaea, Samaria, and Jerusalem for? Because Al-Nasir misled him? Why? Really, what do you think? We begged him, and Levi Eshkol twice sent him his pleas that day, telling him that if he does not touch us we will not touch him. He entreated him: Do not move, and we will not make any countermoves. What do you really think? Do you think we will wipe it all out from our memories? I am talking as a man who seeks both peace and the truth.

Let me tell the Palestinians wherever they may be: Either you shoot or you talk. Those who shoot will receive a response in kind. [Indistinct heckling by MK Tawfiq Tubi]

Let him stop. Is anyone stopping him? Is anyone preventing him from doing that? Are we making it difficult for him to stop shooting? Did we ask him to shoot? It is you and 'Arafat and all of you together, who, by adopting these positions of smoothing over terrorism, are causing the radicalization and the lack of trust in Israel. Let him stop shooting and throwing Molotov cocktails. And as for you, I wish you would stop telling me I am crawling on all fours. You should tell people not to throw firebombs on women! You should say that first of all! From this podium! [Heckling by MK 'Abd al-Wahab Darawshah]

Stop talking about throwing Molotov cocktails and about crawling on all fours. You are the one who splits the peace-seeking peace! You are the man who makes peace impossible and unattainable! The whole world is against me, but I persist. I would like to say that what is important is not what 'Arafat says but whether he shoots. I would like to talk to every Palestinian. Have we ever said that we will not talk to Palestinians? [Heckling by MK Tawfiq Zayyad]

Husayn, the Jordanians, and the Palestinians were in the territories from 1948 until 1967. Why did they not establish a Palestinian state? Why? [Heckling by MK Tawfiq Zayyad]

You keep making comparisons! Somebody here compared Gorbachev to 'Arafat. What kind of comparison is that? Gorbachev talked about demilitarization of foreign relations—he talked about it, and he is now making good on his word; he is pulling his army out of Afghanistan. [Heckling by MK 'Abd al-Wahab Darawshah]

MK Darawshah, with all due respect, who stopped them from establishing a Palestinian state in 1948? What do you want from these people? Stop thinking once and for all, and do not think that everything can be attained through demagoguery. Did Ben-Gurion stand in your way in establishing of a Palestinian state in 1948? [Heckling by MK Darawshah]

I would like to mention the third point—the first being UN Resolution 242 and the second being that he did not pledge to renounce terrorism but that he called it by another name. The late poet Hayim Hazaz used to tell the following story. One day he was walking with a friend in Paris when they saw a big sign with the words sewing machines written on it. The friend said to Hazaz: My wife wants me to buy her a sewing machine; please come in with me. They walked into the shop, and when they asked for a sewing machine the salesman burst out laughing.

They asked him: Why are you laughing? We just want to buy a sewing machine. To which the salesman replied: Here? The friend said: I saw a big sign outside. The salesman retorted: Here we sell signs. So, they must make up their minds either to sell anti-terrorism signs or stop terrorism. And I am saying this as a man who believes that if terrorism stopped peace would emerge.

Back to the third point: Israel's right to exist. This actually was Kissinger's proposal. Kissinger said: Let us test the PLO and the Palestinians from the ideological rather than the diplomatic point of view; not by their diplomatic recognition of Israel but by recognition of the right of the Jewish people to exist.

I would like to ask the members of the house on both right and left: Is there anybody here who questions the right of Palestinians to exist? [Heckling by unidentified MK] I ask myself personally, first of all. I recognize the right to exist of—as written in the Camp David accords—the Palestinian people, their legitimate rights, their right requirements [last nine words in English]. Why do they not say the same about us? [Heckling by MK Ge'ula Kohen]

Ge'ula, you are still in the Sinai. Come off it, you are not yet out of the Sinai or Lebanon.

There is a fourth point, a really brilliant idea: Before the agreement is implemented, 'Arafat appeals to the United Nations to expedite an international force to the territories. A really brilliant idea! Who will agree to that? Why should Israel forego negotiations? There is also the operational aspect: Will an international force solve anything? Take Lebanon as an example, a country where there are no Jews: international and pan-Arab forces are stationed there?

Have they stopped or solved anything? After all, Syria is there by virtue of an Arab mandate while the international force is there by virtue of a UN mandate. Have they solved anything? What a tragedy! What a farce! I remember some Europeans who said: If they only dare touch Lebanon you will see what will happen, we have been in that country since the 11th Century. So where are they? How has the international force helped anything? Can this international force come instead of an agreement, peace, or human relations? [Heckling by MK Me'ir Wilner]

There is yet a fifth point in 'Arafat's statement. He actually proposes something extraordinary. He says that we should first meet his demands and then proceed to conduct negotiations. [Heckling by MK's Me'ir Wilner and Charlie Biton]

Are you 'Arafat's spokesmen today? I think 'Arafat has brought tragedy on you, the Palestinians, and all of us for 21 years. Even from your or MK Yosi Sarid's point of view, he should have delivered this speech 21 years ago.

'Arafat says: Agree to a Palestinian state, agree to an international force. [Heckling by MK Yosi Sarid] I will also get to Husayn. Husayn has been in the picture more than you can imagine.

Peres Holds News Conference on PLO, U.S. Ties

TA1512114188 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1100 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Report by Yaron Kulas on a news conference "currently being held" by Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres—live]

[Text] Good afternoon to you from the Jerusalem Hilton. The news conference is being held mainly for the benefit of the foreign press and is still in progress.

Here is a report on the foreign minister's opening remarks. Our relations with the United States, says Shim'on Peres, are friendly, meaningful, real, and important. There are differences of opinion, and not for the first time. We will discuss these differences, too, in a civilized manner. This is part of the friendly relations between the two countries.

As for President Reagan's and Secretary of State Shultz' proposals yesterday, Shim'on Peres remarked that the PLO should be tested by its deeds, not necessarily by its declarations. Peres said that it was explained to him that the negotiations the United States will conduct with the PLO do not signify U.S. recognition of the Palestinian state.

To the Palestinians in the territories, Shim'on Peres says: Stop shooting, come vote. If a quiet period lasting several months—not years—begins, the Israeli Government will allow free political elections in the territories to permit the election of representatives with whom we will talk and hold negotiations.

Regarding his desire to become finance minister, Shim'on Peres says he has not changed his mind despite the latest developments. I love money and I still want to be finance minister, he said. Peace is important for the economy, too.

The foreign minister was asked under what conditions he would be prepared to conduct negotiations with the PLO. He said: I am not prepared to refer to the PLO as an organization. I want to address the situation. We will be prepared to talk to any Palestinian in the territories who recognizes Israel and who is not involved in violence and terrorism.

As we said, the news conference is still going on. We will continue to update you later, should further declarations emanate from here.

Likud-Alignment Meeting Ends; No Agreement Made

TA1512145188 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1430 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Our party affairs correspondent Yaron Deqel reports that the meeting between the negotiating teams of the Likud and the Alignment, to discuss the establishment of a broad-based government, ended about an hour

ago without reaching any agreement. The Likud's negotiating team—which includes Ministers Moshe Arens and Moshe Qatzav, and Knesset Member [MK] Dan Meridor—is now briefing Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir on the stalemate in the talks.

The Alignment team—made up of Ministers Moshe Shahal and Hayim Bar-Lev, and MK Rafi Edri—is scheduled to brief Shim'on Peres within the next few hours. The negotiations may continue tomorrow.

Peres 'Willing' To Accept Finance Portfolio
TA1412191088 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1830 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Excerpt] Labor Party Chairman Shim'on Peres announced tonight that he is willing to accept the position of finance minister in the new government. Our party affairs correspondent Yaron Deqel is on the telephone with more details:

The assessments and expectations that Shim'on Peres would ultimately choose the Finance rather than the Foreign Affairs portfolio came true this evening.

Following is the text of the announcement issued by the foreign minister's office a few minutes ago: Shim'on Peres is prepared to assume the job of finance minister on the condition that he is bestowed all the powers necessary to heal the economy.

So much for the announcement issued by Peres' office. Attention should be paid to the condition pinned to Peres' agreement—that is, if bestowed all the powers necessary to heal the economy. What this sentence means is: appointing Peres chairman of the Ministerial Committee on Economic Affairs and appointing a Labor Party member as chairman of the Knesset Finance Committee.

Another condition is that the Likud should not sabotage the Finance Ministry by transferring certain departments to another government ministry or by appointing a deputy minister on behalf of the Likud who would be entrusted with some of the ministry's powers. These are the points that remain in dispute between the Alignment and the Likud over the establishment of a broad-based government.

Peres broadly hinted at his decision as far back as yesterday in a meeting of the Alignment ministers. This evening he announced that given the choice between the Foreign Affairs and the Finance portfolios, he opts for the latter.

Jerusalem 'Knows Nothing' About Kissinger Mission
TA1512083788 Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew 15 Dec 88 p 1

[Report from Jerusalem by the political correspondent]

[Excerpt] Jerusalem knows nothing about the plan to dispatch Dr Henry Kissinger to the Middle East on a mediation mission. The above was stated by Foreign Ministry circles in Jerusalem in reaction to reports on the matter.

According to these reports, the new Bush administration plans to send Kissinger on a Middle East mediation mission if the conditions for this become ripe.

Dr Kissinger was the person who, back in 1975, formulated the conditions for a dialogue with the PLO which have served as the guidelines for U.S. policy so far. [passage omitted]

Soviets 'More Sympathetic' to Direct Flights
TA1512084188 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 15 Dec 88 p 12

[Report by Charles Hoffman]

[Excerpt] The Soviets may soon permit "direct flights" for Jewish emigrants leaving on an Israeli visa, which could eliminate the dropout phenomenon in Vienna, THE JERUSALEM POST has learned.

The Soviets are reported to be more sympathetic to Israel's requests to permit direct flights, because of the aid and cooperation Israel has extended in the hijacking affair and in the Armenian disaster. [passage omitted]

Kalmanovich Convicted of Espionage, Gets 9 Years
TA1512104388 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1030 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] The Tel Aviv District Court today convicted Shabtay Kalmanovich on counts of espionage and contacts with a foreign agent. Kalmanovich, who was convicted following his confession, was sentenced to 9 years in prison, including the period since his arrest.

Our correspondent Gay Rolnik reports that Kalmanovich was not indicted on the charge of aggravated espionage, which carries a life sentence. The court issued an order forbidding the publication of any other details connected with the case.

Booby-Trapped Parcel Sent to Lisbon Embassy

TA1412182088 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1600 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] This morning a bomb parcel arrived at the Israeli Embassy in Lisbon, the capital of Portugal. Our correspondent 'Oded Ben-'Ami reports that the parcel aroused the suspicion of the embassy's security officer. He passed it over to the Portuguese police, who identified it as a bomb. Our correspondent Elihu Ben-On adds that the parcel was sent from Portugal. The name of the sender was as Carlos Petantos and the addressee was Maestro Menahem Begin.

Three Gazans Deported to Lebanon 14 Dec

TA1412191788 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1830 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Israel deported three Arab inhabitants of the Gaza Strip to Lebanon today. Official military sources reported that the three are 60-year-old 'Isa 'Id al-Salih Hammadi, 39-year-old [as heard] Hasan Muhanna, and 55-year-old [as heard] 'Abd al-Mahmud Ziyarah. The three were transferred by Israeli Police personnel to the village of Hasbayya in the security zone and were later taken to the village of Zummarayya on the border of the security zone.

Palestinian Census, Passports, ID Cards Planned

TA1512094688 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 15 Dec 88 p 2

[ITIM report]

[Text] Palestinian elements have launched preparations for issuing Palestinian passports. This was reported by the Tunisian paper SABAH AL-KHAYR. According to the report, the passports will be issued to Palestinian civilians for travel to countries that recognize the new Palestinian state.

The paper writes that the PLO will soon carry out a census among Palestinians and examine the type of documents they will carry. This will be a preliminary step prior to issuing Palestinian identification cards and passports at a later stage.

2 Wounded on West Bank; Other Incidents Noted

TA1412213588 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 2100 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Our correspondent Arye Gus has learned from the IDF spokesman that two inhabitants of Judaea and Samaria were wounded today in clashes with the security forces. Arab sources claim that eight people were wounded, including a 4-year-old child.

Two inhabitants were wounded in the Gaza Strip. There were numerous stone-throwing incidents in the Gaza Strip today. The IDF lifted the curfew on the area, except for the Al-Shati' refugee camp and a neighborhood in Rafah.

The IDF spokesman confirmed this evening that three inhabitants of the Gaza Strip were deported today. They had been imprisoned for security felonies, and one of them had been released in the prisoner exchange with Jibril's organization.

[Jerusalem Television Service in Hebrew at 1900 GMT on 14 December adds: "Our correspondent Victor Nahmias reports that the body of a local villager, aged 38, was found this morning in Burqin in the Janin District. The man had been beaten to death. Arab sources said the man had been murdered by masked men because he was suspected of collaborating with the Israeli authorities. In contrast, military sources said that the murder was criminally-motivated."]

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1700 GMT on 14 December adds: "A resident of the Al-Burayj refugee camp in the Gaza Strip was injured this afternoon by a plastic bullet during the dispersal of a group of stone throwers in the camp. He was transferred to a Gaza hospital.

At present, only the Al-Shati' refugee camp remains under curfew in the Gaza Strip."]

King Husayn Meets Mitterrand, Makes Statement

JN1312173588 Amman Domestic Service in English 1700 GMT 13 Dec 88

[Text] His majesty the king held talks in Paris today with the French president, Francois Mitterrand. Discussions during the meeting dealt with a number of issues, including the situation in the Middle East and the European role towards advancing the peace process in the region. The talks also covered the Euro-Arab and Franco-Jordanian relations as well as issues of mutual interest.

The French President Mitterrand hosted a luncheon in honor of his majesty the king and Her Majesty Queen Nur. The luncheon was attended by the prime minister, the chief of the Royal Court, and the Jordanian ambassador in Paris.

After the talks with President Mitterrand, his majesty said he was optimistic regarding a settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict. His majesty said his optimism was because of the concern of the international community to bring about a just and honorable settlement of the Palestinian issue and the positive and responsible attitude of the PLO chairman as well as the situation in the Israeli occupied territories after a year from the start of the Palestinian uprising.

His majesty said he was personally optimistic either for the present or the future. His majesty said the Palestinian leadership and taken a positive step through its acceptance of United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, which implicitly recognizes Israel, and the declaration of the independent Palestinian state. His majesty described his visit to France as successful and that his talks with President Mitterrand dealt with all bilateral, regional, Arab, and international isues.

Reportage on Visit by King Husayn to France

For French coverage of King Husayn's visit to France, see the French section of the 13 December issue of the West Europe DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Foreign Minister Comments on 'Arafat Speech

JN1412131788 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1221 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Interview with Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri by Kamal Tarabayh in Geneva on 14 December—recorded]

[Text] [Tarabayh] Your Excellency Jordanian Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri: The initial U.S. reactions to Yasir 'Arafat's speech at the UN General Assembly yesterday were generally negative. Do you think that this negative U.S. stand on the Palestinian people's rights is steady or may change with the advent of the new administration?

[Al-Masri] We do not have complete information about the ideas of the new U.S. Administration. Therefore, it is difficult to say how its stand toward this subject will unfold. However, I can state that there seems to be an agreement on these U.S. demands among U.S. officials in general, whether in this administration or the new administration. It seems that these demands are agreed upon.

We also believe that the PLO, through the Algiers resolutions and through Yasir 'Arafat's speech, has much complied with these demands. Therefore, we believe it is logical to assume that the United States will open dialogue with the PLO as soon as possible. If this is not possible under the current administration, it must be possible under the forthcoming administration because there is a tendency toward peace and I believe that the atmosphere of international detente is bent toward resolving the world regional problems, and this is one of the most important and most complicated regional problems.

Peace must be established in the Middle East and Yasir 'Arafat's message to the United Nations calls for peace. Therefore, I do not think the new U.S. Administration can ignore this message regardless of their opinion on the U.S. demands.

[Tarabayh] Your Excellency Minister Tahir al-Masri, will the Jordanian Government adopt an official stand on the U.S. rejection?

[Al-Masri] I do not think so and there is no need for that. The Jordanian stand is clear and was expressed by his majesty the king more than once. Yesterday he was the first to phone Yasir 'Arafat in Geneva to congratulate him on his speech and the contents of his speech.

[Tarabayh] In your opinion, what steps will Jordan adopt, whether unilaterally or together with the Arab group, to make the next U.S. Administration change its stands?

[Al-Masri] Diplomatic efforts should be intensified not only in the U.S. arena, but also in the other arenas, especially the European one. His majesty the king is now in Paris to discuss with French officials how to push ahead the peace process in the future, in addition to bilateral realtions. I believe that the Arab states will collectively be involved in such an effort. [Tarabayh] How does Jordan view the Israeli reactions, which are of course negative and fraught with negative stands?

[Al-Masri] These negative reactions were expected. We cannot expect Shamir to be anything but negative and a bigot. We do not want to concern ourselves with Israeli reactions now. We want to be primarily concerned with the U.S. reactions.

[Tarabayh] Your Excellency Minister Tahir al-Masri, regarding Jordan's activity or His Majesty King Husayn's movements between the Arab states, his majesty the Jordanian monarch is exerting blessed reconciliation efforts to improve relations between certain Arab states. Things are being said especially about his efforts to improve relations between Egypt and Syria. How far have these efforts reached?

[Al-Masri] His majesty is continuously working to unify Arab ranks. He firmly believes that a unified Arab stand is the basis for backing our peace efforts. As long as there are solutions or the beginnings of solutions to regional conflicts in the world, we must pursue the same course; in other words, we must also begin to solve the Middle East issue and the Palestine question.

Therefore, all our efforts have been geared for a long time toward unifying the Arab stand. The subject of Syria and Egypt falls within this context. The Arab listener knows that relations between Egypt and Syria are improving beginning with the suspension of media campaigns between the two countries. Jordan and his majesty the king will continue efforts to not only unify Syria and Egypt, but also the other Arab brothers.

[Tarabayh] Do you expect a pleasant and quick surprise concerning the relations between Egypt and Syria?

[Al-Masri] Matters are proceeding normally. We should not place the Arab citizen in a constant atmosphere of suspense. God willing, everything will come at its right time.

[Tarabayh] Your Excellency, His Majesty King Husayn visited France and met with the senior officials there, especially President Francois Mitterrand. How do you assess the existing level of relations between Jordan and France.

[Al-Masri] The relations are excellent as they have always been. His majesty the king pays regular visits to France. We are in constant touch with French officials. I can say that France has an important role to play as a member of the EC and as a permanent member in the Security Council. We want to maintain these contacts at the highest levels.

Police Link Counterfeit Cases to Exchange Rate

JN1412072188 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 13 Dec 88 p 1

[Text] Amman (PETRA)—Police have seized counterfeit currency in American dollar, Turkish lira and Saudi riyal in 15 cases over the past two and half months, and arrested a total of 27 people in connection with the cases, police said Monday.

Colonel Ghalib al-Zu'bi, director of the Public Security Department's [PSD] division in charge of anti-forgery operations and combating drug trafficking, said the seized currency included 40,000 American dollars, 10,000 Turkish liras and 500 Saudi riyals. Al-Zu'bi said 15 of the suspects were Jordanian and the others were nationals of neighbouring Arab states.

Al-Zu'bi said the department had handled an increasing number and an unprecedented level of counterfeit cases over the past few months. He attributed the phenomenon to the recent increase in the value of the American dollar against the Jordanian dinar and the rush to buy dollars by moneychangers and commercial banks in the Kingdom.

Most of the seized currency notes were smuggled into Jordan from neighbouring countries and they found their way to citizens and moneychangers in view of demand for foreign currency, Al-Zu'bi said.

According to the officer, Jordan is free of currency forgers, and the PSD is intensifying efforts to stem entry of counterfeit currency into the Kingdom. He said large amounts of counterfeit currency were found in neighbouring countries, and warned that there would be increased efforts to smuggle them into Jordan in the coming months.

Warning the public to be alert against counterfeit currency, Al-Zu'bi also urged citizens to report all major transactions involving American dollars and conduct dealings only through licensed banks and moneychangers in the country.

He said the Jordanian dinar was impossible to forge as was proved from previous instances which were discovered immediately.

AL-SIYASAH on King's 'Reconciliation' Efforts

JN1412173688 Kuwait AL-SIYASAH in Arabic 13 Dec 88 pp 1, 20

[By Ahmad al-Jarallah]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] King Husayn, the veteran Arab politician, has embarked on an endeavor and resumed his moves to turn the slogan of accord and reconciliation under which the Amman summit convened into a tangible and entrenched reality. AL-SIYASAH information obtained from parties participating in formulating Arab decisionmaking affirm that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad has expressed his readiness to cooperate with Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and both Yemens within the framework of an Arab grouping for the countries east of the Mediterranean.

Asking Al-Asad to become reconciled with Iraqi President Saddam Husayn does not prevent asking reconciliation with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak. It seems that President al-Asad has seen at last an Egyptian step contrary to the Camp David accords—that is, Cairo's recognition of the State of Palestine.

AL-SIYASAH sources following the events disclosed that President al-Asad did not only express readiness to become reconciled with President Mubarak—that is, he not only responded to Jordan's efforts to achieve this reconciliation—but he exerted efforts in this direction. During the recent lightning visit to Jordan by Syrian Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam to meet with the Jordanian monarch, Khaddam informed King Husayn of President al-Asad's agreement on the reconciliation with President Mubarak in a clear and frank way. Khaddam also conveyed Syria's unique commendation of Egyptian policy on the Arab and international levels.

The Jordanian monarch heard this stand from President al-Asad personally during his recent visit to Damascus. Moreover, it was agreed during this visit to stop the media campaigns between Damascus and Cairo. It was also agreed that if this agreement is abrogated, either side will hold contacts with the other party through Arab channels to immediately tackle this.

AL-SIYASAH sources added that the cessation of media campaigns is only a preparatory step for convening a summit meeting between Presidents Mubarak and al-Asad to be held in Jordan under the auspices of Jordan's King Husayn whenever the preparations are completed. The summit will be held in Al-'Aqabah, Jordan's southern winter resort which is close to Egyptian territory, or in Al-Hammah, Jordan's northern winter resort which is close to Syrian territory, or in any other place in Jordan.

During this summit, the Jordanian monarch will try to come out with a complete reconciliation between Presidents al-Asad and Mubarak. It seems that the first signs of this success appeared when Damascus expressed reservation only on Egypt's return to the Arab Economic Unity Council last week without escalating its s'and to a blatant rejection as happened in similar cases.

If King Husayn's efforts here succeed, this will be one of the prominent links between the Arab grouping of the countries east of the Mediterranean and the Nile Valley. This mission will then be similar to his mission in the Bab el Mandeb Strait to link the GCC states with the states east of the Mediterrannean.

AL-RA'Y on King's Efforts for Arab 'Entity'

JN1012095288 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 10 Dec 88 p 1

[Editorial: "On the Threshold of a Great Achievement"]

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn's comprehensive statement to the Kuwaiti AL-SIYASAH shows clearly that the Arab nation is on the threshold of a great pan-Arab achievement. His majesty is seeking to build an entity comprising the Arab countries east of the Mediterranean. He is also calling for an entity comprising the Arab Maghreb countries. These two entities, together with the GCC countries, would constitute an Arab force under the umbrella of the Arab League.

It goes without saying that an entity comprising Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and the YAR would revive the eastern front and provide the Arabs with a major deterrent military force that they had never before achieved. This front is the main requisite for redressing the balance of power in the region, forcing Israeli aggressors to reconsider their estimations, and accepting the just and comprehensive peace that they have so far resisted and prevented.

Undoubtedly, this force would complement and back the Arab peace plan, especially since the PLO accepted Resolutions No 242 and 338 and can no longer be asked for more. It is no secret that King Husayn's effort to establish an entity with such a force is a high pan-Arab performance and a realistic performance that helps the peace process take on a dimension that makes it applicable.

It was natural, therefore, that his majesty stressed the need for the return of sisterly Egypt to the Arab League, for amending the Arab League Charter in a way harmonious with the desired quality of Arab action, and for the regular convening of ordinary Arab summits.

Establishment of the Arab entity east of the Mediterranean would be a major uprising by the Arab reality. It will be the pan-Arab response to the heroic struggle waged by the men, women, and children of the Palestinian uprising in the occupied territories. It is the kind of response for which these kinfolk, and the Arab masses everywhere, have long aspired and waited.

History will recall with great pride all the Arab leaders who get involved in the establishment of this desired entity. History will also recall that Husayn ibn Talal called for and designed the most significant pan-Arab achievement of the contemporary era.

Al-Huss on U.S. Security Council Resolution Veto

NC1412201988 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 2000 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] A report from New York says that the United States has vetoed a Security Council resolution condemning the Israeli act of aggression against Lebanese territory on Friday [9 December]. Fourteen votes were cast in support of the resolution to one against. There were no abstentions.

The initial official Lebanese reaction to the U.S. veto came from Prime Minister Dr Salim al-Huss, who said that this vote by the international community represents a victory for Lebanon. He said: We very much regret and, in fact, are surprised by the U.S. veto because it comes from a country that advocates human rights.

Israel's Expulsion of Palestinians Protested

NC1512123588 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1130 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] The Foreign Ministry today asked Ambassador Rashid Fakhuri, Lebanon's permanent representative at the United Nations, and Ambassador Salim Naffa', Lebanon's ambassador in Geneva, to submit an urgent complaint to the UN Security Council and the United Nations because of Israel's new violation of Lebanon's sovereignty by deporting three more Palestinians to Lebanese territory. This constitutes a new violation of the UN charter, the human rights convention, and the fourth Geneva convention.

Ambassador Salah Sutaytiyah, director of political affairs at the Foreign Ministry, explained that Lebanon will complain to the United Nations whenever Israel embarks on aggressive practices against it and its sovereignty.

Syrians Said Moving SAM Missiles to New Sites

NC1512131488 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] According to a report from Al-Biqa', the Syrian forces began on Sunday to change the positions of the SAM missile batteries in the area, moving them to a number of overlooking hills. They are reportedly doing this to guard against any possible Israeli military operation in light of the recent Israeli landing operation in Al-Damur.

Paqraduni Discusses Elections, Syria's Role

JN1512071988 Kuwait AL-ANBA' in Arabic 12 Dec 88 p 26

[Interview with Karim Paqraduni, deputy commander of the Lebanese Forces, 'Umar Sabahi in Beirut—date not given]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] [Sabahi] Your proposals are criticized because they disregard the Syrian factors in Lebanon and the region although Lebanon is the one suffering.

Paqraduni: The Lebanese presidential elections are not only necessary so that Lebanon will remain united and independent, but they are necessary for Syria and the region. This is because the prevalence of chaos in Lebanon or the establishment of fundamentalist republics in Lebanon will undermine all regional systems. Therefore, I believe that it is in the interest of Syria to hold presidential elections in Lebanon because not holding them is more dangerous than holding them.

There is another important point. Today, we are on the threshold of a new Arab age with the end of the Gulf war. And the feature of this new Arab age is the emergence of a new Arab order. In the fifties and sixties, Egypt was the pivot of the Arab order. In the seventies, particularly after the Camp David accords, Syria became the pivot of the Arab order. Today, in the nineties, Iraq, which is a new base, will become the pivot of the Arab order.

In light of these changes, I believe that the Lebanese file will become a heavy burden if it is not closed and if it continues to bleed. There is an interest in closing this file, particularly the part related to the republican presidency.

With regard to what is being said on making concessions to peddle this constitutional deadline, we, as the Lebanese Forces, are ready to give the maximum to the Lebanese partner and not ready to give the minimum from our independence and unity to any non-Lebanese party.

[Sabahi] In addition to this, I believe that it is useful to note that, so far, nobody can say that Syria asked a Lebanese price to facilitate the solution in Lebanon?

Paqraduni: I can say that until 1985, Syria did not define a price in Lebanon. The Syrian president repeated in front of me—and he once sent a verbal message to President Sarkis through me saying: "I ask nothing from President Sarkis because any request will be viewed as an imposed order. And President Sarkis should propose what he can shoulder as the president of Lebanon." I consider this a wise and intelligent stand. This policy continued until 1985, the date of preparing the tripartite agreement. Here a strategic difference appeared between the two states and two concepts.

Since that date, I believe that Lebanon will not pay this price and this error must be corrected by returning to the old policy and then everything will be subject to dialogue. The Lebanese should be left to define the nature and kind of Syrian-Lebanese relations. On this occasion, I have a theory that I declared on this issue.

[Sabahi] Since when?

Paqraduni: Long ago. I can reiterate it now. My theory is this: It is better for any Arab side to respond to the minimum, common demands of all the Lebanese and not the maximum demands of part of the Lebanese

because the minimum demands of all the Lebanese people can be a firm, practicable proposition and the maximum demands of some of the Lebanese people are fragile and impracticable.

Therefore, when some tried to respond to the maxiumum demands, they fell in Lebanon. When Israel responded to the maxiumum demands of a certain Lebanese community, it fell in Lebanon and the 17 May agreement fell with it. The same can be said of the tripartite agreement.

On the Lebanese-Syrian relations, I say the following:

Let the Lebanese define these relations and they will succeed. The same can be said of the Lebanese-Palestinian relations. I know the Lebanese people. In both cases, they ensure the interests of the other party as much as they ensure their own interests.

I think it is a great blunder to subject the internal political movement to external conditions, such as arguing that in order to hold the Lebanese presidential elections in Lebanon, prices should be paid, plans presented, or agreements obeyed. I consider this to be wrong and harmful to everyone. In my view and no matter how long it takes, the practical solution will be as follows:

1. A president will be elected who will be a president of reconciliation and consensus.

2. This president will effect national reconciliation which will include all parties concerned without isolating, shunning, or vetoing any Lebanese side.

3. A national government will be formed which will lay the basis for internal political reform and for Lebanon's external relations including relations with Syria.

I cannot see any solution outside this mechanism.

[Sabahi] On which rung in the above ladder will you place the operation of withrawal of foreign forces?

Paqraduni: The aim of the above remarks is to place the issue of foreign forces withdrawal on the Arab and international levels. Here I address myself to any Arab meeting on the summit or on foreign ministers level and tell them that there are three main points that should be dealt with to solve the Lebanese crisis. They are:

1. Efforts should be exerted to implement Resolution No 425 stipulating the Israeli army's withdrawal from southern Lebanon.

2. Efforts should be exerted to put a timetable for Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon.

3. Efforts should be exerted to form an Arab and international joint force to replace the Syrian and Israeli forces and help the Lebanese Army temporarily to spread its forces on the Lebanese territory.

This is the basis of our efforts to solve the Lebanese crisis. We must distinguish between solving the crisis of the institutions in Lebanon—such as the presidency, the prime minister's office, and the Army's command—and the solution for the Lebanese crisis.

As for Damascus, there is "the passage and the residence" issue—a slogan which was raised by the first government policy statement of independent Lebanon. This statement pledged to Syria that Lebanon will not be a passage way or a residence for Syria's enemies. I think you realize the importance of this issue for the Syrian Government.

I believe there is growing Arab interest in the Lebanese issue. Nay, I feel that the Lebanese crisis has become a concern of many Arab leaderships. I believe that the Lebanese and the legal government in Lebanon (he means General 'Awn's government) should reformulate a Lebanese stand toward the growing Arab interest in Lebanon.

I believe that there are steps which we as Lebanese Forces demand. The first of these is holding an Arab summit on Lebanon. The Lebanese issue should be on the agenda either alone, or at the top of the list. I believe that Lebanon deserves a summit. We should not fall into the trap of shelving the Lebanese issue or referring it to the Arab League Council or to the Arab Ministers Council.

The second is to ask the government to re-establish diplomatic relations on ambassadorial level between Lebanon and Egypt. It is no more possible that Lebanon remains the only country, or one of two or three countries, that do not recognize Egypt, despite the fact that there are firm historic and political ties between the two countries.

The third is to work on ensuring a concentrated Arab initiative to supervise presidential elections in Lebanon. This is what the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has already started. The Kingdom has taken it upon itself to support the Bkirki initiative directed toward Syria.

We hope Saudi Arabia will succeed in convincing Damascus of the Bkirki initiative. We also feel that King Fahd is personally giving the Lebanese problem special attention. [passage omitted]

[Sabahi] On the level of governmental institutions, there was a problem between Gen 'Awn's government and the Lebanese Forces. Has this problem been resolved and have you handed over the institutions to the military government?

Paqraduni: Handing over the institutions in Lebanon requires firstly the presence of the president guaranteeing all these institutions. Secondly, there should also be a Lebanese Government which is responsible for running these institutions. Today, however, in light of the collapsed or collapsing institutions, this is impossible.

[Sabahi] Is not Gen 'Awn the prime minister?

Paqraduni: He is a prime minister but not a president.

[Sabahi] Is he the charge d'affaires of the presidency?

Paqraduni: In the first place, the only thing that is required now is presidential elections. Anything that remains comes after holding the elections and not before. Now, nothing is allowed to be proposed outside the framework of the presidential elections. Any other suggestion will be like an attempt at creating contradictions. We are used to them and will reject them.

As for the attempt to weaken some stands, we reject those as well. I do not see any scope for discussing any practical or reform issue before electing the president of the Republic.

In other words, political reform comes after the elections, Syrian-Lebanese relations come after elections, so do reconciliation and the return of the Lebanese state on all Lebanese territory. The Presidency is the key.

Army Denies Hindering Travel at Crossing

NC1412172688 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 1630 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] The Army Command Guidance Directorate has denied a report carried by certain private radios that the 6th Brigade checkpoint at Al-'Ijjah is preventing civilian cars from crossing into East Beirut.

The Army Command stressed that Army personnel manning the Al-'Ijjah checkpoint ensure security and crossing in the area and control the travel of military men between the two parts of Beirut. The opening or closing of the crossing point is a political affair, in which the Army does not interfere.

Hizballah Claims Attack From E. Beirut Repulsed

NC1512071688 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] A Hizballah security source has stated the following: The gangs of the eastern area attempted to infiltrate along the Sahra' al-Shuwayfat combat line last night. Hizballah strugglers, using machineguns and rockets, confronted and foiled this attempt from the very first moments.

Hizballah Denies 'Promise' To Turn Over Assassins

NC1512073688 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] A Hizballah information official has stated the following:

Some sources in the Amal Movement are leaking false reports about a promise made by a Hizballah delegation to the Syrian officials to turn over the killers of the Amal leaders. These reports are untrue. Hizballah's position on this matter is clear and unambiguous.

The Hizballah information official added: We hope that the identity of the murderers will be uncovered, and we are totally unconcerned with the accusations regarding this issue. Those who insist on using the shed blood of the three Amal officials as a pretext must abandon their errors and divisive stands.

Al-Asad Returns From Talks in Saudi Arabia

JN1412191288 Damascus Television Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] President Hafiz al-Asad and his accompanying delegation this evening returned to Damascus following a working visit to Saudi Arabia during which he held talks with King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, and Prince 'Abdallah ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, the Saudi crown prince, first deputy prime minister, and head of the National Guard.

The official talks held by President Hafiz al-Asad in Riyadh with King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques, were concluded today in a 3-hour meeting held at 1200 Damascus time today at the president's residence in Riyadh.

The meeting was attended on the Saudi side by Prince 'Abdallah ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, the crown prince, first deputy prime minister, and head of the National Guard; and on the Syrian side by Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar'.

This final meeting was preceded by a meeting held at 1000 Damascus time between President Hafiz al-Asad and Prince 'Abdallah at the president's residence. The meeting was attended by Khaddanm and Al-Shar'. During the two meetings, they continued discussion of the issues talked about during the meeting held last night between the president and the custodian of the two holy mosques which are connected to developments in the region, particularly in the Arab arena.

King Fahd hosted a luncheon banquet in honor of the president. The banquet was attended by Prince 'Adallah ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam, Faruq al-Shar', and Shaykh 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Khuwaytir, minister of higher education.

The president was accorded an official sendoff at the Riyadh airport. Heading those who saw him off was King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, custodian of the two holy mosques. He was also seen off by Prince 'Abdallah ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, the crown prince, first deputy prime minister, and head of the National Guard; Prince Sulayman ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, amir of Riyadh; princes; ministers; and senior Army officers.

The Syrian and Saudi national anthems were played, and the president and King Fahd reviewed the guard of honor. King Fahd and Prince 'Abdallah then saw the president off at the ramp.

Talks Have 'Positive Results'

JN1512090288 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0500 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] The Riyadh summit between King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz and President Hafiz al-Asad has ended. The Syrian president returned to Damascus after a visit to the Kingdom that lasted no longer than 24 hours. It is said that some positive results have been achieved in this summit. They are related to the return of Egypt to the Arab League, the improvement of relations between Damascus and the PLO, and especially the end of the deadlock in the Lebanese crisis.

It is said that the summit will help bring about an imminent solution to the Lebanese issue, at least as far as electing a president is concerned after a 3-month constitutional vacuum. It is also said that the name of the Lebanese president that will be agreed upon and elected is included in the list prepared by the Lebanese Patriarch Nasrallah Sfayr.

Anyway, the Saudi-Syrian talks may lead to an imminent Arab summit. Let us hear our Riyadh correspondent 'Abdallah al-Shihri reporting on Al-Asad's visit to Riyadh.

[Begin recording] Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad concluded a 2-day visit to Riyadh during which he held talks with King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques, and his Crown Prince 'Abdallah ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz.

In an official statement, a responsible Saudi source stressed that President al-Asad's visit comes within the framework of consultations between the leaders of the Arab countries, especially during this important stage through which the Arab region is passing, and which, according to the source, requires continued joint efforts toward achieving all that is aspired to by the Arab nation. The source said the talks dealt with all issues on the Arab scene and current events in general.

It seems from this official Saudi statement that the talks between the two sides have basically dealt with the situation in Lebanon and especially the Lebanese presidential elections. Riyadh believes that the continuation of this situation would further complicate and prolong the crisis, which would seriously harm the Lebanese themselves in the first place.

The issue of Egypt's return to the Arab League seems to have also occupied an important place in the talks between the Saudi monarch and the Syrian president. The available signs point to positive changes in the Syrian stand on restoring relations with Cairo. However, no one could fix a date for the restoration of relations as contacts and mediations are continuing, but apparently needing more time and patience.

Palestinian-Syrian relations were among the important topics raised in the summit meeting. Riyadh is in the lead of the Arab capitals that are exerting extensive, far-from-the-limelight efforts to relax the atmosphere between Damascus and the PLO under the Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat. The Saudi officials hope efforts in this respect will succeed as soon as possible.

The discussions also dealt with supporting the Palestinian uprising as the most prominant positive phenomenon through which the Palestinian demands can be met and the occupied Arab territories can be regained.

The two sides also discussed the situation in the Gulf region—in light of the cease-fire between Baghdad and Tehran—and the promotion of bilateral relations. [end recording]

AL-BA'TH Cited on Meeting

JN1512081288 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0545 GMT 15 Dec 88

[From the press review]

[Text] Gentlemen: The newspaper AL-BA'TH affirms in its editorial today that the great interest in the Syrian-Saudi summit meeting in Riyadh is natural in view of the fragmentation, confusion, and imbalance in the Arab state of affairs and also in view of the need to rectify this situation and turn it into a cohesive, balanced situation and also to take the initiative in confronting challenges.

AL-BA'TH explains that as Syria renews its political move in its Arab environment today, it proceeds from these facts, guided by pan-Arab constants. Meanwhile, Syria explains to the Arab brothers that pausing at sideline differences and narrow interests should not take place for any reason whatsoever.

AL-BA'TH points out that on numerous occasions leader Al-Asad emphasized the importance of Arab solidarity in light of the current Arab circumstances and that Syria, from the position of strength and self-confidence, stresses the importance of enhancing the Arab situation, supporting Arab solidarity, and clearing the Arab atmosphere.

Concluding, AL-BA'TH says: This is Syria's constant approach as well as its ever-opened path before all Arabs to participate in shouldering the pan-Arab responsibility and defending the Arab nation and also in protecting Arab generations from perdition, homelessness and historic humiliation.

Reportage on Visit of USSR's Rafik Nishanov

Attends Talks 12 Dec

JN1312072588 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 2115 GMT 12 Dec 88

[Text] Damascus—The session of talks between a delegation from the general secretariat of the Arab Parliamentary Union [APU] led by APU Secretary General 'Abd al-Rahman Burawi, and a Soviet delegation led by Rafik Nishanov, member of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium and first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, began today. Members of the two delegations attended the talks.

During the talks, the two sides exchanged opinions on the political situation in the region and the world, and means of promoting cooperation between Arab and Soviet parliamentarians within the framework of the IPU.

Burawi reviewed the APU's views on the issues of international detente and disarmament.

Nishanov expressed satisfaction with the proposals made during the talks regarding the promotion of parliamentary cooperation between the two sides.

Holds News Conference

JN1512070588 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 2115 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Rafik Nishanov, member of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium and first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, has praised the relations of friendship and cooperation between Syria and the Soviet Union. These relations are constantly consolidating in the interest of the two friendly countries, he added.

In a news conference he held this evening in Damascus, Nishanov said the Soviet leadership, parliament, and the entire people have highly appreciated the cable of condolence sent by President Hafiz al-Asad to President Gorbachev on the victims of the natural disaster that hit the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, and the Syrian assistance to the victims of the earthquake.

He described the talks that his delegation held with the Arab Parliamentary Union and the Syrian People's Assembly as very useful and constructive. They were held in a cordial atmosphere and in a spirit of confidence and mutual understanding, he said.

The Soviet people, he added, have feelings of true sympathy and respect for the courageous industrious Syrian people. He stressed anew that the struggle of the Syrian people to consolidate their political and economic independence and guarantee their legitimate rights and national interests is met, and will continue to be met with the firm support of the Soviet Union.

He emphasized that President al-Asad's successful and dramatic visit to the Soviet Union in April 1987 gave new impetus to the multi-sided cooperation. The regular summit meetings between the two leaders Al-Asad and Gorbachev, characterized as they are by a spirit of comradeship and mutual confidence, are of special importance, he said.

Nishanov condemned the oppressive practices perpetrated by Israel against the uprising in the occupied Arab territories. He said: As now evident, no one doubts the Palestinian people's determination to attain their right

to self-determination. The uprising, he added, has radically changed the situation in the region and had a formidable impact on large world circles.

Confers With Al-Shar'

JN1512144888 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1430 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Damascus, 15 Dec (SANA)—Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' today received Rafik Nishanov, member of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium and first secretary of the Central Committee of Uzbekistan, and his delegation.

The talks dealt with existing bilateral relations of friendship and cooperation and current developments in the region.

Departs Following Visit

JN1512181488 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1615 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Rafik Nishanov, member of the USSR Supreme Soviet Presidium and first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, and his delegation left the country via the Dar'a border post today. Mishanov expressed happiness for visiting the country and praised the results of the meetings the delegation held during this visit. He also praised the continuously developing Soviet-Syrian relations.

Kurdish Party Leader Meets With Officials

Visits Ba'th Party Official

JN1212194288 Damascus Television Service in Arabic 1830 GMT 12 Dec 88

[Text] This evening, 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, received Mr Mas'ud al-Barzani, head of the Kurdish Democratic Party in Iraq. They talked about Arab regional developments and the role of Iraq's patriotic forces in standing up to the fascist practices of the fascist regime of Saddam against the Iraqi people and struggling masses.

Al-Barzani explained the inhuman practices in Iraq and the liquidation of many of the country's people. He said that the Iraqi regime attempts to cover up its practices by making announcements on phony decisions in order to cushion the effect of popular resentment against the regime.

Both sides emphasized the importance of the struggle of the patriotic forces in Iraq and joint action to forge a national coalition to restore to Iraq its correct national and pan-Arab face.

Holds Talks With Qaddurah

JN1412143688 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1215 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] People's Assembly Speaker 'Abd al-Qadir Qaddurah today received Mas'ud Barzani, leader of the Kurdish Democratic Party in Iraq. Shakir Sa'id, chairman of the assembly's Arab and Foreign Affairs Committee, attended.

During the meeting, the conferees discussed current issues, developments, and stands in the Arab region in general and in the Iraqi arena in particular, and the role required from the national and progressive forces in fraternal Iraq to unify their resources and powers to confront Saddam's bloody and fascist regime, which spread corruption, tyranny and injustice against Iraq and its people, who are fighting for freedom and democracy.

Barzani presented a detailed and comprehensive review of what is taking place in Iraq and the oppressive measures employed by the tyrant regime in a genocidal, displacement, and execution campaign against the Iraqi people, who are exhausted by these oppressive, inhuman measures—condemned by the whole world.

Meets Information Minister

JN1412181488 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1615 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] In Damascus, Information Minister Muhammad Sulayman today received Mas'ud Barzani, secretary general of the Kurdish Democratic Party, which is one of the Iraqi national opposition factions. The meeting dealt with the conditions and existing problems in Iraq.

Barzani affirmed the Iraqi Kurds' opposition to any trend of isolation from the Arab nation's body and their interest in resolving the problem within the Arab framework. He also referred to the ties that connect them to the rest of citizens and to the relationships, which were built by common history and pan-Arab battles against foreign campaigns against the Arab region.

For his part, the information minister affirmed Syria's support to the Iraqi national opposition factions and its denunciation of the Iraqi regime's policy—based on oppression, murder, and displacement of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi citizens.

Afghanistan

Najibullah on 'Demilitarization,' 'Neutrality'

PM1512093488 Paris L'HUMANITE in French 6 Dec 88 p 16

[Interview with President Najibullah by Francis Cremieux in Kabul; date not given]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] From my lengthy conversation with President Najibullah I recall the following powerful opening remarks: "You Europeans and you French have endured two wars. The first lasted 4 years, the second rather more. They ended with military victories. In our country the war has been going on for 10 years, and we believe that there is no question of a settlement by force of arms. We will achieve peace by political means. This is our aim. There is no other solution. We must impose our policy on the enemy camp. They are starting to realize that it is better to negotiate than to fight."

I mentioned the possibility of the Soviet withdrawal's being linked in the next 3 months with specific measures to close the training camps in Pakistan. "Do you have some kind of symmetry in mind? I can tell you that this has been our concern ever since the Geneva accords came into effect. However, those who refuse to honor the accords signed hold symmetry in contempt. Last year in the United Nations 123 out of 159 countries voted against Afghanistan. This year the resolution was adopted by universal agreement, including Pakistan's. Politically, they have gained nothing. Our prestige in both the Islamic world and Europe is strengthened by this vote. You ask what point we will have reached by 15 February. Last year I was asked what would happen after 15 May and I replied: 'Come and see on 15 July or 15 August. Come back 15 May next year: We will celebrate together the first anniversary of Geneva.'

"Let us remember that the opposition claimed that the revolution was weak and that it would collapse after the first Soviet withdrawals. This has not happened. Despite the increase in foreign intervention, the republic has grown stronger. We must continue to struggle flexibly and wisely."

[Cremieux] Are you talking to me as a moralist?

[Najibullah] Not at all. I am a realist. I see things clearly. I am not in the dark. We have a very clear view. Our party has decided to relinquish its monopoly on power. This has been done. By 15 April we could have a very broadly based coalition government. This will be not a retreat, but an advance, for us—the practical implementation of the national reconciliation policy.

[Cremieux] The seven-party alliance in Peshawar does not want Najibullah. It rejects Najibullah's Loya Jerga that approved the constitution and the multi-party system and that elected you president.

[Najibullah] Najibullah is not at issue. It is Najibullah's policy that is at issue. This is progress. Former King Zahir wants to convene a Loya Jerga, while Rabbani has established a "council" which I do not recognize. They do not recognize the Loya Jerga that I have convened. The problem remains undiminished. There is only one solution: to convene a Loya Jerga comprising all parties, on condition that a cease-fire is established, all forces establish a coalition government, and a peace conference is convened. To this end it is necessary to engage in dialogue and negotiate.

Who other than a legitimate government can convene a Loya Jerga? Only the Loya Jerga can amend the Constitution. It does not have to be convened exclusively by just one of the sides participating in the coalition government. Neither Najibullah nor Zahir nor the Peshawar alliance can convene a Loya Jerga. It can only be done by a broad coalition government.

This is the process. There will be no Loya Jerga without stability in the country. Najibullah has already convened it. If Zahir convenes one, neither Gulbuddin (Hikmatyar, Islamic extremist leader—L'HUMANITE editor's note) nor Rabbani will accept it. So unity within the coalition is indispensable.

[Cremieux] It is said that former King Zahir is going to dive back in.

[Najibullah] How do you mean?

[Cremieux] To return to the political arena. He has been somewhat reticent about it.

[Najibullah] If so, he will have to be a good swimmer.... He is old and very conservative, as old people often are. He must also take care of himself. There is no question of his regaining his throne.

[Cremieux] Can the Loya Jerga amend the constitution?

[Najibullah] Definitely, and it decides the form of its own composition.

[Cremieux] But it is you who convenes it and forms it!

[Najibullah] Either I or someone entirely different appointed by me as my replacement. This is Article 4 of our constitution.

[Cremieux] Assuming there is no instability, how long do you expect it will take to convene it?

[Najibullah] Between 2 months and 1 year.

[Cremieux] Do you believe that an international conference could be convened and Afghanistan's neutrality guaranteed within this same time limit?

[Najibullah] Under UN auspices. We hope so. Just as we propose a demilitarization and the gathering of weapons for return to sender.

[Cremieux] There is already a presidential decree setting the prices for weapons bought back by the government.

[Najibullah] We are at present buying back weapons from the armed opposition. However, with stability restored, it is not a matter of buying back but—I stress—a matter of recovery. You cannot allow millions of weapons to remain in circulation in the country....

[Cremieux] The American Administration apparently favors an "Austrian-style" neutrality. Have you been approached by its envoys in this connection?

[Najibullah] Not at all.

[Cremieux] The establishment of Austrian-style neutrality implies guaranteed borders and thus the recognition of the Durand line as the Afghani-Pakistani border. It is a complicated matter, is it not? You do not recognize the Durand line, artificially defined under imperial rule in India.

[Najibullah] It is not complicated. It is very simple because the Durand line problem does not depend on guarantor states. The solution of this issue will result from a referendum. We will consult the entire Afghan people. It is they who will decide. In Geneva Pakistan tried to raise this at the last minute. We represented our state. We did not shoulder this responsibility. It is for the entire people to decide.

[Cremieux] You have always said that there were places reserved for the opposition at all levels. In practical terms, does this mean that some leaders will have to relinquish their posts, their power?

[Najibullah] The important point is not who holds a particular post. The prime issue is that peace and security be established by the Afghan people. This is the PDPA's policy and this is the policy that I have proposed, and the responsibility for ensuring that it prevails has been entrusted to me.

[Cremieux] Some 5 weeks ago a communique announced the arrest of "elements hostile to the national reconciliation policy." Nobody was named, but some names have been rumored—Baryalai's, for instance.

[Najibullah] The law does not require the names to be published.

[Cremieux] Are there many of them?

[Najibullah] Some 20.

[Cremieux] One of my former interpreters, Khalid Hafiz, is among them. He does not seem very dangerous to me.

[Najibullah] You are right. He will be released tomorrow.

[Cremieux] What about the others?

[Najibullah] They are awaiting trial. [passage omitted]

Mujahidin Leader Comments on Al-Ta'if Talks

PM1412112688 Jeddah 'UKAZ in Arabic 10 Dec 88 p 5

[Interview with Mujahidin Alliance leader Prof Burhanuddin Rabbani by Muhammad al-Khudari in Riyadh; date unspecified]

[Excerpts] [Al-Khudari] During the meetings held recently in Al-Ta'if, did you and the Soviets come out with a comprehensive overview of the situation in Afghanistan?

[Rabbani] We put forward our demands and explained the conditions in Afghanistan. We urged the Russians to be realistic in their view of the Afghan problem, especially as they have taken a positive step by sitting down with us at the negotiating table. I believe that they are now much more realistic than ever before. They now realize that the true and fundamental decisionmakers in the Afghan issue are the mujahidin, and nobody else, as it is they who represent the Afghan people.

On this basis, they emphasized to us their readiness to open a new chapter in their dealings with the Afghan people—something we sensed during negotiations. They also announced their readiness to continue negotiations until a solution acceptable to all parties is reached. [passage omitted]

[Al-Khudari] There was no specific agenda for your meeting in Al-Ta'if. It was merely a review of the two parties' views. During the meeting, the Soviets insisted on the formation of a broad-based government. I remember your saying in a satellite interview from Washington that you would not accept the formation of a secular government or the participation of any element from the present Kabul government. You stressed that there would be Islamic rule under the Islamic jihad fronts. Does this constitute an obstacle to negotiations with the Soviets?

[Rabbani] Yes. This was exactly what happened during the negotiations. They demanded that the agent government's members participate in power. But we asked them: Do you want reconciliation or not? If the answer is "yes," as you have constantly reiterated, we Afghans believe that the question of forming a government is our own business. No foreign party has the right to impose its will on us. We have the right to determine our own future. And we will not allow any party—whether the Russians, Americans, or anybody else—to interfere in our own affairs. [passage omitted]

[Al-Khudari] Do you have at present a specific political working program or an ambition for your strategic goals?

[Rabbani] Our general strategy aims to secure the transitional stage first. We have emphasized that it is possible to include all elements in the transitional government, except communists and war criminals. We believe that such a government should be based on an Islamic foundation, because the Afghan people are Muslim. There should also be a shura council from which a government would be formed to assume power in Afghanistan during the transitional period and draw up a constitution for the country, after which a permanent government would be formed.

As for the general outlines of our foreign policy, we will pursue a policy of nonalignment and will not allow anyone to interfere in our affairs. It must be borne in mind that Afghanistan is an Islamic country, and our foreign dealings will be based on this.

[Al-Khudari] Do the Soviets have any specific demands?

[Rabbani] At present they demand that power be shared and that present government members take part in a coalition government. This is in addition to the truce issue which Gorbachev announced this year. We emphasized to them that a truce be meaningless in these circumstances. Nevertheless, we are willing only to refrain from obstructing your Army's evacuation during the negotiations between you and us.

[Al-Khudari] In his recent address to the United Nations Gorbachev made three points about the situation in Afghanistan: first, a comprehensive cease-fire as of 1 January 1989. Second, the deployment of a UN peacekeeping force in Kabul and at strategic points. As for the third, it is the neutralization and demilitarization of Afghanistan. What is your position on these points?

[Rabbani] We strongly reject these proposals because they mean procrastination of the withdrawal. This is because a cease-fire or truce would be meaningless under the Russian Army's presence in Afghanistan. As for the neutralization of Afghanistan, Afghanistan is not an aligned state. Anyhow, we would not agree to Afghanistan's aligning with any political alliances.

As for the demilitarization of Afghanistan, I am amazed and astonished, because it is an absurd request. How can we —and we are an oppressed and persecuted people who have never threatened any other state—be demilitarized? How can we then defend ourselves against any foreign invasion? [passage omitted]

[Al-Khudari] Is there complete unanimity among the mujahidin factions on continuing the dialogue and negotiations with the Soviet Union?

[Rabbani] Some organizations have their own views in this regard, but the majority's decision supports the continuation of negotiations. [passage omitted]

[Al-Khudari] What is your opinion of the idea of convening an international conference to discuss the situation in Afghanistan?

[Rabbani] I believe that there is no need for an international conference at present, especially as there are direct negotiations between us and the Russians. This is because other parties' intervention could cool the issue—something we would not accept at all. [passage omitted]

[Al-Khudari] In his speech Gorbachev urged the cessation of arms supplies to both sides. Do you support this idea?

[Rabbani] First, I would like to point out that the problem is primarily to do with them because the cessation of arms supplies can be achieved not by statements but, rather, by assurances that they would not intervene militarily in any way. Their aircraft and missiles were launched against our towns and villages from the Soviet Union. I would also like to point out that despite the withdrawal of 50,000 soldiers from Afghanistan, the war has become more ferocious, especially after they brought into Afghanistan new long-range missiles, namely Scuds, which are very destructive. They have also brought MiG-27 aircraft, which they had not used against us before.

Thus I believe that the war strategy in Afghanistan has changed and depends no longer on the Soviet Army's density but, rather, on advanced weapons. So the withdrawal of 50,000 soldiers from Afghanistan is superficial because the desire for war is still there. Therefore, I see the withdrawal as an attempt to win over world public opinion. The future alone which will reveal to us the Russians' intentions because their credibility in Afghanistan is still unclear.

[Al-Khudari] Do you believe that the Soviets will complete their withdrawal on schedule, or will they change their attitudes?

[Rabbani] I believe that they must complete their withdrawal because they, as a major state, signed an agreement to that effect in Geneva. They have repeatedly announced that they will withdraw on schedule. But the Soviet proposal that we heard recently causes us to doubt the Russians' credibility. This is because their withdrawal does not require UN forces, an international conference, or the demilitarization of Afghanistan. All these proposals mean nothing unless the Russian Army withdraws from our territory before the date set—that is, assuming the intention to do so, as they claim. [passage omitted]

[Al-Khudari] With regard to the mujahidin demand that the Soviets pay financial compensation, will this be discussed during the next rounds of talks with them?

[Rabbani] We place this among our main priorities because the Soviet Union must rebuild what it has destroyed in Afghanistan. Most Afghan cities and villages have been badly damaged. [passage omitted]

[Al-Khudari] How do you view your relations with the United States?

[Rabbani] The United States has always adopted, and still adopts, a positive position on the Afghan problem.

[Al-Khudari] What about the new U.S. Government?

[Rabbani] I believe it will pursue the same policy. [passage omitted]

[Al-Khudari] In a previous statement you said that there are at least 30 million mines in Afghanistan. What arrangements will be made to remove them?

[Rabbani] We actually began removing them long ago. But the removal of mines requires enormous technical and financial resources. We have sought help from some states. The Soviets have promised to give us the appropriate maps to locate the mines. This is in addition to UN efforts in this regard. [passage omitted]

Mujahidin Coalition To Adopt Common Emblem, Name
NC1512075388 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0330 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Hojjat ol-Eslam Heydar Mohaqqeq, member of the Central Council of the Islamic Jihad Guards, stated in an interview that the Islamic foundations and parties affiliated with the eight-party [as heard] coalition of Afghan mujahidin held a meeting in the Hazarajat region and adopted a basic solution for achieving more unity in the true sense of the word.

He added: After the issue of the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan was brought up, and following world political developments pertaining to Afghanistan's problem, political and military officials and dignitaries of the Hazarajat area—realizing the plots by Eastern and Western arrogance—considered that the only path toward the liberation and victory of the oppressed Afghan nation is continued unity. Thus, following several meetings in the presence of all the officials and mujahidin of Hazarajat that emphasized the unity of the Afghan mujahidin forces, the representatives of the eight parties recently held another meeting in (Chahburi) district in Ghazni Province and declared their unity.

He said: Of course, the representatives of the Harakat-e Eslami were unable to participate because their leaders are outside Afghanistan.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Mohaqqeq said of the unity: During this session, the officials of the eight parties decided to replace all previous names and emblems with one common name and emblem. They also decided to merge all the military bases within Afghanistan and the political offices abroad that are affiliated to the eight-party coalition. He also called on all officials of the eight parties, on officials of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and on the Afghan mujahidin and emigres to wholly devote themselves in creating unity, which is the only path that will lead to the Afgan nation's liberation, to strive toward this unity, and to strongly resist any kind of obstructionism against this unity.

Iranian 'Spy' Answers Questions on Activities
LD1412173388 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Jamshid [name indistinct], son of Gholam Mohsen, a citizen of Iran, who had entered the territory of the Republic of Afghanistan five times in order to carry out espionage, terrorism, and subversive activities, was captured recently by the security forces of Nimruz Province.

A press conference has been arranged in this connection in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs press center. Replying to questions from foreign and domestic reporters the spy talked about his life and his espionage and subversive activities in Afghanistan, the living conditions of Afghan refugees in Iran, and the various types of weapons [words indistinct].

Military Carries Out Operations in Various Provinces
LD1512094288 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0457 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Kabul, Dec. 14, BAKHTAR—The Armed Forces of the Republic of Afghanistan have carried out mopping up operations in different [words indistinct] of the provinces of Nangarhar, Paktia and Herat and Paghman and Sarowbi districts of Kabul Province. As a result of such operations, tens of extremist elements were killed and wounded. A large quantity of the weapons of the enemies fell to the hand of the extremists.

The extremists fired 400 surface-to-surface rockets in the residential areas of Mehtarlam city, centre of Laghman Province. As a result of it, four were killed and fifteen injured. Eight residential houses were also destroyed.

As a result of infighting among different factions of opposition groups in Lowgar and Ghazni Provinces, twenty seven were killed and eight wounded.

Protest Note No 149 Submitted to UN Mission
LD1412111288 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0500 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Kabul, Dec. 13, BAKHTAR—The 149th rpt 149th notice of the Foreign Affairs Ministry of the Republic of Afghanistan (RA) on the flagrant Pakistani

violations from the provisions of the Geneva Agreements was submitted here today to the UN Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP), reports the Liaison Office of the Foreign Ministry with the UNGOMAP.

The notice gave necessary information on seven cases of clear Pakistani violations from the provisions of the Geneva Accords, mentioning the date and place of the violations. It asked the UN mission to assess the cases and inform the side of the Republic of Afghanistan and representative of the UN secretary general of its results.

Plane Carrying Relief Supplies Leaves for Armenia
Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0430 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Kabul, Dec. 13, BAKHTAR—The first Afghan plane loaded with relief goods for the victims of the Armenian SSR quake left here for Yerevan, centre of that Central Asian republic of the USSR today, a representative of the Ministry of Commerce said in an interview to a BAKHTAR reporter.

Dried fruits, including 85 tons of raisins, kernels, pistachios, almonds, walnuts and others as well as woollen clothings like jackets, mattresses, etc will be shipped by several flights of Ariana Afghan Airlines to Armenia.

According to another report workers and employees of the Gozargah textile mill have voluntarily donated their one day salary to the victims of the Armenian earthquake.

Bangladesh

Delhi: Opposition Leader Demands Free, Fair Polls
BK1412040388 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] The leader of the seven-party alliance and Bangladesh Nationalist Party chief, Begum Khaleda Zia, has reiterated her demand for free and fair polls in the country.

Addressing the Overseas Correspondents Association in Dhaka yesterday, she said the alliance will continue to oppose the Ershad regime until democracy returns to Bangladesh. Praising the new development in Pakistan, she demanded a caretaker government as in Pakistan during the recent polls.

Iran

Mohtashami on Conditions for Party Activity
LD1412140488 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] The criteria and conditions for political parties and group activities were today announced by the interior minister. We have a report on this:

On the reason for postponing political parties' activities Interior Minister Mohtashami said that the postponment stemmed from the country's special circumstances, particularly the 8-year war imposed on our nation by global arrogance. Naturally, during the war and under the difficult and dire cirmumstances in which the nation's entire power, ability and potential was directed toward the national struggle and defense we could not be expected to implement the law on political parties intact and with no alteration.

At any rate, now that we are not in practice involved in a military confrontation we can deal with this important matter. Regarding the characteristics of the parties that may operate in Iran, the interior minister said that the law stipulates limits and regulations with which the parties must conform in terms of their political organizations.

He continued: The main criteria in this regard is the Constitution, the law approved by the Majles in September 1981 and related regulations which have been approved by appropriate authorities. Those political parties and groups may operate legally to which the offenses contained in the paragraphs of Article 16 of the Political Parties Law do not apply. Those parties and groups which consider themselves bound by the provisions of the said laws may always engage in party political activity.

Mohtashami later described the background to and motives for forming political parties in Iran, going back to the Qajar [a dynasty] period and the beginning of sending students abroad, and the fact that political parties in Iran do not have a good reputation nor a reliable and worthy record. He stressed that our Islamic society warns the future parties in this system to learn a lesson from the bitter experience of their predecessors and to move, with pure national and Islamic intentions, toward realizing the nation's interests.

Failing that, they will fall into the clutches of aliens and unsavoury elements. For this reason, Islamic, national, and revolutionary interests must form the foundation and basis of political parties and organizations in this country. Political groupings cannot always be sanctioned. A political organization in the country must pursue one major objective, namely, rebuilding society and opening up golden opportunities for growth and development in line with the general public's thinking.

A critical standpoint, with a healthy, constructive, and reformist intention toward the government is the least a political organization will do in its support of the people. Naturally, when criticism, debate, and constructive suggestions, as well as the reformist spirit of the people of opinion and ideas take shape in political parties and groupings to protect the nation, this in itself will be an important guarantee in maintaining and correcting the government's actions toward the objectives of Islam, the nation and the people.

Referring to Article 7 of the Political Parties Law, dealing with the qualifications of those who may form a political party, group, or faction, the interior minister added: The ones who are more qualified to do this are those who possess pure intentions, superior management ability and a thorough knowledge of domestic and foreign politics, devoting all their ability, strength and management prowess to solving the problems of the sacred Islamic system.

Concluding, the interior minister added: Those who wish to apply for a license to engage in political party activity, before doing anything else, should apply to the Interior Ministry in Tehran and to local governorates in the provinces to complete the appropriate forms and to hand in the necessary documents.

The applicants' files will consist of the platform and the constitution of the political party or group concerned. Being bound by the Islamic Republic Constitution will have to be the clearest principle incorporated in the political parties' platform. The Secretariat of Article 10 Commission, after investigation and study and after being satisfied that the political platforms and party consititutions accord with the law, will decide on the applications. After this stage a license will be issued to the applicant.

The activity of the political party or group which has obtained a license must remain within the framework of the approved platform and constitution. In the event of any violation the Article 10 Commission may deal with the matter through legal procedures.

Majles Deputies Discuss Constitutional Reform

LD0512185088 Tehran IRNA in English 1800 GMT 5 Dec 88

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 4, IRNA—Majles deputies today expressed views for and against constitutional reform following statements by senior officials emphasizing the need for changes and clarifications in the basic document.

"Fundamental changes" in the Constitution were necesary said Hojjat ol-Eslam Majid Ansari in a meeting organized at Tehran University's Law and Political Science College. But Hojjat ol-Eslam Asadollah Bayat believed there was a need for coordination rather than reform.

The basis for the discussion was a letter to Imam Khomeyni signed by nearly a hundred Majles members expressing concern over the ambiguous position of the special state panel for deciding matters of national expediency and its apparent right to legislate without constitutional authority.

It was estimated that the letter, written to Imam Khomeyni, had the support of two-thirds of the Majles but it was delivered to the imam shortly after it was prepared and not all who sympathized with it got a chance to sign it.

"The basic problem is not the Constitution itself but the failure to implement it," Hoj. Bayat said. The issue was rooted in the lack of coordination between various authorities specified in the Constitution and the way the relevant articles were interpreted.

"The law alone is not enough for a lively society. If there is no coordination the law would face the wall," he added.

But Hoj. Ansari believed the Constitution needed major reforms. "Fundamental changes in the constitution are a real necessity at this stage of the Islamic Revolution," he said. He was generally supported by deputy Abbas Douzdouzani.

The need for the special state panel for matters of expedience was still felt. Nevertheless chapters about all three branches of state had to be changed. "The Constitution is the work of the fallible human mind, how can it be perfect?" asked Ansari.

Ansari said despite recent views on the Constitution, raised by President 'Ali Khamene'i [and] head of the experts assembly Ayatollah 'Ali Meshkini, there was no serious effort to reform the document which was approved in a referendum nine years ago this week.

If there was a general consensus among Majles members and top leaders to make changes, Majles speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani believes it should be done in Imam Khomeyni's lifetime, Bayat said.

Lavasani Addresses UN on Palestinian Rights

LD1512114088 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Mohamad Reza Lavasani, deputy minister of foreign affairs in international affairs, who is in Geneva to participate in the special meeting of the UN General Assembly on Palestine, in a lengthy speech this morning criticized the performance of international forums in the efforts to attain the Palestinian people's rights. He described the struggles of Palestine's oppressed people during the past 40 years and the Muslims' uprising in the occupied territories as an epic in the contemporary human history.

According to an IRNA report, Lavasani initially praised the martyrs of the Palestine Muslims' Islamic uprising, who have been martyred by the Zionists in the occupied territories. He then expressed his appreciation of General Assembly's timely decision to hold the extraordinary session in Geneva in an effort to support the brave uprising of the Palestinians.

He added: The fact that the UN General Assembly has resisted U.S. dominance and has gathered in Geneva in an exceptional manner, prompts a serious look at the victimization of the Palestinian nation, beginning with the injustice of partition.

Referring to Iran's stance he said: We believe the partition resolution to be unjust. Only the establishment of a State of Palestine in all Palestine territory can be regarded as compensation for this injustice.

He announced: The Islamic Republic of Iran [IRI] does not recognize an entity by the name of Israel in the occupied territory of Palestine and on the basis of the above it opposes any position which may entail, in any form, recognition of the existence of the Zionist regime. This is because any recognition of the Zionist regime is tantamount to usurping the rights of Palestine's people as well as ignorng the blood of the martyrs who were martyred either for safeguarding these rights or restoring them. It will also entail increasing the slaughter of Palestinians by the Zionists.

Concluding his remarks, Lavasani, addressing all the world community of nations' representatives, stressed: Announcing its stance, the IRI expects all countries to support the legitimate rights of the Palestine nation and to recognize the obvious right of the Palestinian nation to set up an independent State of Palestine in all of Palestine's sacred territory, doing so in recognition of historical facts and with respect to principles of justice.

Velayati Departs on 3-Day Visit to PRC

LD1412183388 Tehran IRNA in English 1658 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Text] Tehran, Dec 14 IRNA—Foreign Minister Ali 'Akbar Velayati left for Beijing tonight on a three-day state visit.

"Following the Islamic revolution's triumph, Iran and China have greatly expanded bilateral relations", he told reporters before departure.

The two sides would discuss political, industrial, cultural, and trade ties as well as cooperation at international levels, especially at the U.N., said Velayati, who is accompanied by Majles (parliament) representatives and Foreign Ministry officials.

Khamene'i Ends Visit to Fars Province

LD1412212788 Tehran Television Service in Persian 1600 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Excerpt] At the end of his 4-day visit to Fars Province the president of the Republic this afternoon left Shiraz amid official send-off ceremonies by the local authorities.

Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, chairman of the Cultural Revolution Council, was present at a meeting of Shiraz University undergraduates this morning to reply to questions on the problems and difficulties of universities and higher education.

At this meeting Mr Khamene'i referred to the efforts of the responsible authorities who have been planning to remove the problems of the higher education. He said: The expansion of scientific studies in this country is a directive and general policy of ours. We maintain that this policy must be implemented. [passage omitted]

Pakistan

President Ishaq Khan Addresses Parliament 14 Dec

BK1412104588 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0607 GMT 14 Dec 88

[Speech by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan to joint session of Parliament in Islamabad—live]

[Text] Honorable members of Parliament: Peace be upon you. It is certainly a unique honor for me to address the newly elected Parliament in my capacity as the newly elected president of the country. I humbly bow my head to express my sense of gratitude to the omnipotent and omnipresent God, the sole possessor of all powers to bless with honor and also with disgrace, who blessed me—an insignificant and humble subject—with this honor.

After thanking the Almighty God, I consider it my pleasant duty to offer my thanks to you for your support to me in your capacity as members of the electoral college for the presidential election. I am also thankful to the entire nation for expressing its confidence in me through their elected representatives, both at the center and in the provinces. I find no words and means of expression which can fully reflect the feelings of thanks and gratitude which overflow my heart.

Here, I will certainly say that I am aware of my shortcomings and (?transitoriness), and I fully recognize the requirements of the confidence, which you have expressed in me. I am fully aware of the responsibilities which are characteristic of the high post of the Presidency. I assure you with full confidence that, God willing, on my part I will not betray your confidence nor will you find me intentionally remiss in the discharge of my responsibilities, which have been vested in me as the constitutional head of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. I will do my best to keep the country steadfast on the constitutional paths and to respect and follow the Constitution by all means. If you ever find me deviating from the constitutional path, it will be your right to relieve me of my post without hesitation and delay.

My second pleasant duty is to congratulate the members of the assemblies who contributed to my success in the election; who have reached the legislature after passing through a democratic process; who are the shining symbols of this new democratic era which has emerged after a long and patient wait. This is a very great honor which is a sign of success in an open and fair competition. May God make this reward an auspicious gift.

I am doubly pleased to participate in this session today because I am also availing myself of the opportunity to meet my long-time Senate colleagues today. I am confident that they might also feel the same kind of satisfaction and happiness—over the coming into being of the elected National Assembly as a result of the free, fair, and party-based elections for the first time in the history of the nation—as a painter does when he has completed a picture.

Our Parliament is composed of the Senate and the National Assembly. Due to the setting up of the National Assembly, the second wheel has been added to the vehicle of Parliament, and now it will be able to move full speed ahead on the path of the legistrative process. The Senate is a symbol of the federation, a means of the representation of the provinces, irrespective of their population and areas. It is a vehicle of continuity and a valuable repository of experience and maturity.

On the other hand, our National Assembly today is the indirect expression of the people's choice, a reflection of the enthusiasms of the younger generation, and a manifestation of the new aspirations and the coming together of the two houses has constituted a Parliament, which in turn is the manifestation of the collective thinking of the people of Pakistan, the center of their aspirations, and the pivot of their expectations. The people's confidence and trust accord a very sacred status to this Parliament, and respecting this sanctity without any reservations is the foundation stone of the democratic system.

Dear members, unfortunately, our national performance in the field of democracy has not been very praiseworthy, even though our religion has taught us the lesson of the equality of the mankind and our country itself came into being as a result of a democratic movement. Despite this, we almost forgot all these lessons in a very short time, and the people saw that the sapling of Pakistani democracy could not grow further.

Why did it happen? If the soil was fertile, the seeds were good, the atmosphere was congenial, then where did the defect lie? A correct answer to this question is very essential for the stability of democracy in Pakistan. However, finding a correct answer to this question is not easy.

We all know that several mistakes have been made in the past. It is the task of the political thinkers and intellectuals to explain and analyze those mistakes. As for me, I can say on the basis of my experience that there was only one basic mistake and that was deviation from the Constitution. That one mistake opened the door for another, thus setting in motion a chain of mistakes which had a destructive effect on democracy.

The Constitution is the documentary evidence of the collective thinking of the nation. The Constitution determines the ways of the present and the goals of the future. The Constitution provides the ways to identify and resolve problems. The implementation of the Constitution is the only decisive formula for the survival of democracy and the achievement of national aspirations. The mistake has been that we did not respect the sanctity of our Constitution, ignored the constitutional requirements for political interests and expediencies or interpreted them in accordance with those designs, and thus tried to move forward by destroying the invaluable treasure which, in fact, was our goal.

And, again, the same thing happened which usually happens. Today, when we once again embark on a journey, we should pledge not to deviate from the country's Constitution in any way, God willing, and all its requirements will be fulfilled by all means. If there is any room for doubt or suspicion, then courts will be approached; but the the sacredness of the Constitution will not allowed to be tainted.

It is correct that the Constitution is not a holy scripture, but it can be amended, a course for which provisions and procedures have been laid down in the Constitution itself. You must, however, remember that the only durable and reliable constitutional amendments are those which are made according to constitutional provisions. Come, let us vow that instead of making expediency the guiding torch in the affairs of the state, we will consider our Constitution a lighthouse which provides spotless, permanent, and all-dimensional light.

While announcing the nomination of the prime minister, I expressed my wishes and explained the democratic traditions about the relationship between the ruling party and the opposition. But, with your permission, I would like to briefly reiterate that in my opinion although the people have directly assigned the task of accomplishing the national objectives to the ruling party, they have also indirectly placed a responsibility on the opposition to monitor the ruling party and not allow it to deviate from the path of these objectives.

I believe that both can discharge their responsibilities when a climate of mutual understanding and healthy cooperation and collaboration is created between them. It is evident that due to the additional benefit accrued by a numerical majority and the powers enjoyed by the ruling party, it has added responsibility in this connection. They should act with magnanimity and display the spirit of forbearance and forgiveness. Their attitude should reflect modesty and humility and they should behave toward their opponents as they themselves expect to be treated.

They should forget the confrontation with their electoral opponents and try to win their cooperation because therein lies their honor and the nation's welfare. They should set brilliant examples of forgiveness such as were displayed during the [word indistinct] of Mecca. They should also have the courage to tolerate criticism and openly display it.

Democracy is an essay in difference of opinion. Giving the wrong color to difference of opinion and expressing suspicion about it is tantamount to strangling the democratic traditions. In the past the rulers described criticism of the government as rebellion against the state and thus introduced the wrong tradition of leveling the charge of rebellion against the political opposition. This was negative thinking, and it is very essential to give this up.

On the other side, the opposition should adopt a healthier attitude as compared to the past. Under all situations, criticism of government policy or lowering its morale should be motivated by the national interest and the people's welfare. Criticism for the sake of criticism without being positive or useful should be avoided. Both the ruling party and the opposition are essentially complementary elements of the Parliament.

Parliament, in essence, is an institution where conflicts are settled through debate, where differences are removed through frank debate and discussion. The Parliament is the most appropriate institution from where members sitting on both the Treasury and opposition benches can express a positive and enlightening attitude.

As an empowered legislative body, you will definitely face a busy legislative schedule. First of all, you have to approve the budget for the remaining period of the yeai which was presented a few days back. Then you have to deal with numerous ordinances which we were compelled to promulgate due to the nonexistence of the National Assembly to run state affairs.

These ordinances relate to the enforcement of the shariat, the setting up of courts for speedy trials, antiterrorism steps, delimitation of constituencies, and other such important matters. New bills will also be introduced and thus you will be busy giving full attention in the significant and crucial task of legislation. I hope that you will discharge your constitutional responsibilities keeping in mind the national interest and with a spirit of understanding. I hope you will act in a climate of harmony and in accordance with the supreme democratic traditions.

Dear members of Parliament, most of you are aware of the problems plaguing the country. The geographical region in which Pakistan is located has become the center of world attention. Along with the barbarity, clash of interests, and mutual confrontation of the forces of exploitation and expansionism, domestic unrest and conflicts have made the entire region the victim of instability.

Intense warmongering (?trends) have created a situation of confrontation, and the whole atmosphere has become fraught with tension. As result, in the context of this region, there are statements about the dangers to global peace. Besides, the effect of tension and conflict which is found in the international situation has undoubtedly fallen on us as on others. And thus, apprehension among the people of this region has increased.

These circumstances have compelled Pakistan to give serious attention to its defense needs and their logical requirements. In addition to this, the responsibility to play a vital role in establishing a peaceful atmosphere and stability in the region has been placed on Pakistan. The government attaches great importance to the country's defense requirements and will fully strive to help provide the best professional training and to equip the armed forces with necessary sophisticated equipment.

We feel that the defense of the country's borders and of national stability are the combined responsibility of the entire nation. Every citizen has to fulfill his responsibility in this connection. Pakistan is a peace-loving nation and has no aggressive designs against anyone; but no one should make the mistake of considering our peace-loving attitude as our weakness.

As the elected representatives of the people, you are duty bound to make the determination of Pakistan categorically clear: that every step taken toward the territory of Pakistan with ill intentions will be a step toward destruction. Every evil eye will be blinded, every aggressive arm will be cut off. Along with this you have to show the world that Pakistan has is broadminded toward its friends. It always extends its hand in cooperation and toward those who cooperate with Pakistan. It will never fail to reciprocate for sincerity and affection.

Pakistan desires peace and seeks friendship with all. Pakistan is a trailblazer of independence, equality, and solidarity among nations, and it is against all forces of political exploitation and economic disparity. Pakistan is busy in its struggle to make this world cleaner, more comfortable, and more beautiful for humankind, and it will continue to do so. These are the determinations and objectives which constitute the basic lines of Pakistan's foreign policy.

Our foreign policy, as usual, will be based on traditional and recognized principles of interstate relations and will continue to reflect our Islamic ideologies. It will be the uniform mixture of elements of longevity, durability, and dynamism which will be in conformity with the changing situations and will be free from contradictions.

We will discharge our international duties. We will not waver at all in our commitment to the UN Charter. Nonalignment will continue to be the cornerstone of our policy and we, as a member of the Nonaligned Movement, continue to work for the consolidation of regional and international peace. Fraternal relations with the Islamic states and promotion of the solidarity of the Islamic community will remain our unchanging objectives.

We will continue to actively participate in the work of the Islamic Conference Organization. We will continue to fully side with all the Islamic and Arab causes. We will also continue to support the movements for independence and democracy in Africa and South America.

The promotion of good relations with neighbors will, as usual, continue to be the cornerstone of the overall strategy of our foreign policy. For this we will continue to work on a bilateral basis as well as within regional organizations like SAARC and ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization comprising Pakistan, Iran and Turkey]. Pakistan will have the honor of hosting the SAARC summit at the end of this month, and we hope that this conference will greatly contribute toward increasing regional cooperation and further promoting bilateral relations.

We will continue to strive for peaceful and good-neighborly relations with India on the basis of respect for national independence, sovereign equality, geographical integrity, noninterference, and nonuse of force, so that a peaceful and just solution of all outstanding problems, including Kashmir, can be found.

The foundation of our friendship with the United States is based on our identical perceptions regarding regional peace and stability. The further strengthening of this friendship will continue to be a cornerstone of our foreign policy.

We will also endeavor to establish cordial, friendly relations with the Soviet Union and to promote bilateral cooperation in economic and other fields.

Our relations with China, our bilateral relations, have model status. China is such a trustworthy friend that has sided with us even during the most difficult times. Further promoting these exemplary relations will be the topmost objective of our foreign policy.

We attach great importance to our relations with the West and Japan, and we value their support and assistance. We will continue to strive to promote bilateral cooperation and partnership on the basis of mutual benefit with them.

We welcome the end of the Iran-Iraq war and hope that the cease-fire will prove to be the harbinger of a just and stable peace. This will definitely prove to be the factor strengthening the security climate around us and Islamic solidarity.

As far as Afghanistan is concerned, we consider the Geneva accords an epoch-making event which has opened the door for a comprehensive solution to the problem. We believe that the return of the Afghan refugees to their homes in honor and dignity is highly essential for a comprehensive solution to the Afghan problem, and this is possible when the Geneva accords are fully implemented and a broad-based government, acceptable to all sectors of Afghan society, is set up in Afghanistan.

Setting up such a government is the task of the Afghan people themselves, without any outside interference. We have always said that the Afghan problem can only be solved through political means and not through the use of force. That is why it is obligatory for all sides to continue working for a peaceful solution to the problems so that the Afghan people's difficulties will end. Until this is achieved, we will continue to fulfill our humanitarian and Islamic responsibility to help our Afghan brothers.

For success in the struggle to realize all these foreign policy objectives, it is essential to set our domestic affairs in order. Today the country is facing countless problems. The people will definitely expect the newly elected government and the elected representatives to give immediate attention to their problems and take meaningful steps to solve them. Referring to internal problems, first of all my mind goes to those innocent citizens from some areas who do not feel themselves as safe in their own country.

The deteriorating law and order situation in the country has greatly improved thanks to the government's efforts. It is an important responsibility to give a permanent shape to these efforts and to make their effects everlasting. There is still much to be done.

It is the right of every Pakistani citizen to enjoy a safe environment and economic [word indistinc], whether he is inside his house or out, in his city or in another, in his province or in any other province. He should feel that his life and property are secure. He should not confront any kind of linguistic, communal, or religious prejudices. There must be mutual trust. Such a harmonious and fraternal atmosphere should be established not only among various parts of a province, but among all the provinces and from one end of the country to the other.

Only then will we, as one nation and as followers of Islam, reap the benefits which are called the blessings of unity. This task is practically a holy war, which requires impartial analysis of problems and needs realistic policies. The center and the provinces should take concerted steps to infuse in the people of all areas a feeling of equal participation in national affairs and to remove legitimate grievances in the just distribution of resources and equal opportunities in employment and development.

It will be possible only when there is a reflection of the feelings of harmony, cordiality, and Islamic brotherhood in the relations among various provinces and between all the provinces and the center. It is obvious that this type of relationship will help in sympathetically considering the viewpoints of one another, in reviewing problems impartially, and in making a (?technical assessment) of them in view of the limit and constraints in resources.

The government will endeavor to provide a new and active character to the relationship between the center and the provinces. And instead of going into the traditional accounting of authority, arrangements are be made for their appropriate devolution. For the success of

this policy it is essential that all parts of the country should bear in mind that their importance and their status are the gift of Pakistan.

They are the waves which exist both under and over the surface of the river. All parts of the country are integrated and interdependent. In this very mutual interdependence lies the guarantee for their strength and the secret of their progress. While talking about progress, our attention automatically goes to those economic problems facing us.

The current year is the first of the seventh 5-year plan. During the fifth and sixth 5-year plans, there was a notable increase in the rate of overall economic growth, and Pakistan's economic performance was much better than the majority of developing nations. But during the last part of the sixth plan period, this trend changed. During the past years, overall national savings declined, and fiscal imbalance increased.

The reasons for this include our inflexible taxation structure, overdependence on export duties, rapid increases in recurring expenditures, the heavy rate of internal debt, deficit financing, and the unsuccessful efforts of the provinces to meet their financial deficits. As you have heard in the budget speech, the outcome of all this is that there was not as great an increase in government revenue as in expenditure.

In recent years the trade imbalance decreased, but due to the considerable reduction in the remittances of overseas Pakistanis, the current account and liquid reserves have declined, thereby increasing the burden of foreign debt. The trend of increasing prices, the damage caused to the agricultural by floods, and the decrease in industrial production have affected the economic power of the country.

Despite these difficulties, development of the country, economic stability, and the prosperity of the people are the objectives which you have to address. You have to control inflation, eliminate mounting unemployment, and lessen dependence on loans. For the country to get an honorable status in the community of nations, it is essential to become an economic power. I will even go so far as to say that without economic independence, political independence exists only in name.

As the saying goes, if the trees in the economic garden are not deeply rooted, it is difficult to stand up in the economic boat. [sentence as received] Which path to follow and what policies are formulated to become an economic power is up to you, gentlemen. I only want you to note that a country's progress does not mean anything unless it has three virtues—universality, comprehensiveness, and omniscience.

By universality, I mean that the progress is not limited to only one area, but its impact is felt in all parts of Pakistan. Comprehensiveness symbolizes that no one sector is given undue preference for development, but the effort should be made for the overall development of the economy. I am using the word omniscience in the sense that the fruits of development should not be a monopoly of the privileged class, but should reach the common man.

Ladies and gentlemen, agriculture and industry are the two basic pillars of our economy. In the field of agriculture, the country has nearly reached the goal of self-sufficiency. We have not only to maintain this situation, but we have to further strengthen it. Our fertile land and the labor of our farmers speak of far-reaching prospects for us in this field. If we adopt appropriate policies, apply modern scientific methods, build the infrastructure in the rural areas, and introduce a better storage and marketing system, then we can increase our production capability to such an extent that Pakistan will become a reliable granary for most of the Afro-Asian countries.

Neither have we been able to show our talents in the field of industry. Our industrialists are skilled and enterprising. They also possess excellent administrative capabilities and are good judges of economy. Our technicians are proficient, determined, and experienced and very adept in general industrial technology. Above all, our industrial workers are illustrious and courageous. Due to these three factors, there is no reason why Pakistan cannot display excellent performance in the industrial field.

It is only necessary to formulate policies which can provide a complete sense of protection to our own as well as to foreign industrialists so that they can invest with full confidence in Pakistan. Full attention should be paid to infrastructure and the provision of basic facilities like energy, especially nuclear energy, so that new industrial units are established without any obstacles. Similarly, industrial peace should be ensured by meeting the just needs of workers so that industrial production targets are easily achieved.

We want the private sector to play the vanguard role in Pakistan's march toward industrial progress. That is why we have no intention of nationalizing industrial units. We believe that the public sector should use its energy in building up infrastructure and the provision of basic facilities. For this, the government will fully strive to improve public sector performance and efficiency. Increasing employment opportunities will be considered as a basic factor in the government's economic planning.

The government will also work to create a new cordial understanding between employers and employees. To increase industrial production and improving overall economic performance, a new strategy will be formulated with the cooperation of administration and workers, and it will all be part of the new industrial policy which will make Pakistan a modern industrial center on the Asian Continent.

To make the country a industrial power, it is essential to give attention to the development of basic industries instead of continuing to manufacture only goods of every day use so that our industrial sector's (?foundations) are strengthened and progress toward self-sufficiency.

Today, most of the world's countries, the developed countries, have begun molding their industries on the basis of their future requirements. They are replacing traditional industries with high-tech industries. They know that the importance of traditional industries will remain intact, but due to the shortage of space and manpower, they have been compelled to transfer their traditional industries to developing countries where there is room for them. We have to prove to these countries that Pakistan deserves their attention in this regard. Pakistan has the atmosphere and the capability which fully conform to their policies of traditional industry relocation. If we succeed in convincing them of these factors, we can expect an astonishing increase to the pace of our industrial development.

But, industrial development requires the reliable foundations of scientific research and development. So long as we do not establish research institutions of high standards and do not make sincere efforts to bring them up to international standards, our technological development will always remain subservient to the mercy of others. Whether it is in the field of agriculture or industry, the government should not aim at the domestic market only, but should keep its eyes on the global market in which Pakistan's share is small compared to its capabilities.

We cannot achieve the desired increase in the volume of exports without providing stable foundations to the national economy. Unfortunately, despite loud claims, no progress has been made in the task of searching for new markets and adding new items to the list of exports. The unfavorable international economic order, a discriminatory attitude toward the Third World, and artificial obstacles in the way of free trade have hampered this progress. I hope that the new government will also pay full and serious attention to these problems.

Honorable members of Parliament, any effort for economic development, in my opinion, cannot bring about the desired results so long as the trend of rapid increase in population is not contained. If, in spite of considerable rate of economic growth during past years, the fruits of development could not reach the common people, it was because of the rapidly increasing population which rendered those gains ineffective. Pakistan is a country of unlimited resources, but how long will it be able to fulfill all the needs of an unlimited population.

Certainly, God has taken the responsibility to provide a livelihood to his creatures. But, besides the mere livelihood, there are other requirements and necessities for a good life, like clean drinking water, a house to live in, suitable arrangements for medical treatment and education, and several other such facilities. If the people want a better life, they will have to contain the trend of (?unabated) increase in their numbers, and to motivate the people to do so is a challenge which only an elected popular government can take.

Another basic factor for development is education. Without universalizing the education, no development plans can succeed nor can the country secure its appropriate position in the civilized world. Unfortunately, the rate of literacy in our country has been at a regrettably low level, especially in rural areas and among women. The areas of formal and higher education present a much more regrettable scene. Under this situation, how can the (?program) of national construction be completed? You will have to take urgent measures to universalize the education. You will have to consider this task as a holy war and will have to take every necessary step for this purpose. The number of schools for technical and professional education and training has to be increased and the expenses incurred on them have to be shared.

At the same time, higher education has to be given special attention. Our youths will have to be motivated toward sciences and the spirit of research will have to be instilled in them, so that we can produce those brains and develop those capabilities which can be most capable of making our dreams of progress a reality. All these objectives can be achieved only when there is order and discipline at our educational institutions, and when the spirit of learning, sense of duty, and the sense of responsibility are created among the students, teachers, and the parents respectively; a clean atmosphere is created at our educational institutions and they are purged of all dross which destroy their sanctity and moral values of the young generation. If we continue to ignore our most important duty of providing correct training to our youths, we do not deserve the right to have wishful expectations about the future of this country.

Several other areas of national life deserve your immediate attention—public health, social justice, communications, supply of electricity to rural areas, and several other fields in which much remains to be done. The menace of drug abuse is a general phenomenon in the country today. Many youths and numerous families have suffered enormously because of the destructive effects of narcotics. On the other hand, guns have reached the hands which are meant to carry books. [words indistinct] and the germs of caste and community are eating up the society from within. We can in no way overlook these negative trends creeping into our national life.

On the other hand, even after 41 years of independence, the common people have not been provided with the facilities to meet their basic needs. There are several areas where even clean drinking water is not available, and even today, the people have to walk miles to get water. There are no suitable medical facilities for the rural people, and they sleep under the open sky. In cities,

the shortage of the means of communication is being seriously felt, while the sanitation system is defective. The local bodies should be entrusted with the responsibilities to solve problems of these kinds. But to do this, their powers and resources need to be expanded. The government should encourage the people to participate in the formulation and implementation of policies in this regard, so that the people may not continue to be idle spectators but can play an active role.

Ladies and gentlemen, as long as we are not able to solve these problems, progress will remain a statistical game. We cannot bring about a change in the standard of living, which is the sole reliable gauge of the actual state of the economy and society.

Honorable members of Parliament, here I would like to say on the basis of my experience that on certain occasions, the governments deviate from the moderate path by overlooking the realities in their bid to do so many things so soon and put a burden on the country's economy which it cannot bear. The result is obviously not good. If, instead of doing this, restraint is observed and a balance is established between the development planning and the resources, we can achieve lasting results and escape the shattering of our dreams and their ill effects.

If we intend to do anything by going beyond our existing resources, we have to take immediate steps to mobilize additional resources. The people, naturally, have several expectations from the new government and additional resources will be required to fulfill them. I hope that the government will pay special attention to formulating such policies which, on the one hand, will control the undue spending of resources and, on the other hand, pave the way for increasing the resources without increasing the burden on the people.

I believe that in this connection special steps are needed to keep a strict watch on nondevelopment expenditure, making the taxation system more effective, and increasing the national saving rate. I know that this is not an easy task. It requires sacrifice, hard decisions, and bold policies; but a government which is the people's own government and enjoys the people's confidence and whose leadership is in the hands of a capable person loved by everyone, whose cabinet includes able, determined, and experienced ministers, is definitely in a position to formulate realistic policies in the broad national interest, inform the people of the realities and prepare them to face these realities with courage. It has the capability to correctly diagnose the disease and also is courageous enough not to refrain from even using [word indistinct] for treating it.

While preparing the government priority list, it should also be kept in mind that Islam was the raison d'etre of this country and can exists only through links with Islam. If we have to set up a true Islamic society, then we have to weaken the roots of various social evils like corruption, bribery, nepotism, and adulteration of food items. Islam is our faith, our ideology of life, as well as our identity. Without a collective character, nations lose their identity. If we have to maintain our national identity, then we have to mold our collective character in the Islamic teachings. Deviation from this path will lead us toward destruction and it cannot be expected from any [word indistinct] to knowingly adopt the path toward destruction.

Ladies and gentlemen, after a few years we will step into the 21st century. If the current century has seen the rise of the developed and newly developed countries, then it should be the effort of the developing world that the new century be called the Third World Century in which the Islamic community has a pivotal role. For this the developing world and the Islamic states should start preparations from now onward, and as members of the most august body of an important Islamic state of the developing world, you should try to create a confidence among the people that Pakistan in shrugging off the deprivations and shortcomings of the 20th century will, God willing, enter the 21st century as a determined, chivalrous, learned, enlightened, healthy, and united Islamic state.

I end my address with prayers that this house proves to be the custodian of the supreme democratic traditions and is crowned with success in discharging responsibilities reposed in them by the God, the nation, and your own souls. Almighty Allah guide you and all of us at every step. Long live Pakistan. [applause]

Baluchistan Assembly Dissolved by Governor

BK1512051888 Islamabad Overseas Service in Urdu 0504 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] The Baluchistan Assembly has been dissolved with immediate effect. It was officially stated in Quetta this morning that the provincial governor, General Mohammad Musa, retired, has dissolved the assembly under Clause 1 of Article 112 of the Constitution on the advice of the chief minister, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali.

Bhutto Will Not Intervene

BK1512082288 Islamabad Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] The Baluchistan Assembly has been dissolved. Our political correspondent says the chief minister went to the governor at 0300 in the night for recommending dissolution of the provincial assembly. The governor did not consult the prime minister.

Earlier, JUI [Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Islam-Fazlur Rahman Group] and BNA [Baluchistan National Assembly] had requested the prime minister to intervene and help resolve the issue of the Baluchistan Assembly.

She had declined on the grounds that it was a provincial matter and should be resolved within the province. But she had offered her services of a federal minister acceptable to both sides as an arbitrator. The prime minister, says our political correspondent, is fully committed to provincial autonomy and to the consolidation of democratic processes in the provinces and in the center.

Bhutto Addresses Parliament

BK1512113588 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Prime Minister Ms Benazir Bhutto has told the National Assembly that her government would always follow the Constitution and fully respect the provincial autonomy. Intervening during the general discussion on the federal budget, the prime minister told the house that the federal government had no prior knowledge of any move for the dissolution of the Baluchistan Assembly by the provincial governor.

She said she received the information this morning from the province and the attorney general has given his view that the governor of the province could dissolve the assembly under Article 112 of the Constitution without informing the federal government. She pointed out that the governor had been appointed before the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] government came to power and the chief minister belongs to IJI [Islami Jamhoori Ittehad, Democratic Alliance].

The prime minister said whatever step had been taken is according to the Constitution as it is. If the members wanted to change the Constitution, let them come forward and join hands with the government to amend it. Until it is amended, she declared that the PPP government, which believes in the supremacy of the Constitution and law, would fully abide by the Constitution.

She also recalled the assurance given by her a few days ago reiterating the government's position that it would not interfere in the affairs of the provinces. It has not interfered in the provincial affairs so far and it will not do so in the future.

The prime minister said the matter is now in the court [as heard] of the people of Baluchistan and they alone will decide it. She gave the assurance that the government would respect their verdict whichever party is voted to power in the province.

Earlier, Mr (Ghulam Haider Amin), Sayeeda Abida Hussain, Syed Ahmad Alam Anwar, Rana Majid Ahmad, and Sheikh Rashid Ahmad sought to move the privilege motion about the dissolution of the Baluchistan Assembly. The speaker reserved the ruling on the motion.

Members of the opposition walked out.

Sri Lanka

LTTE Urges Boycott of Presidential Election

BK1512071288 Hong Kong AFP in English 0457 GMT 15 Dec 88

[Text] Colombo, Dec 15 (AFP)—Sri Lanka's dominant Tamil separatist group Thursday called for a boycott of December 19 presidential elections and charged that the two main candidates had been responsible for the island's ethnic conflict.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), in a statement issued from its London office, said it had decided not to support any of the three presidential hopefuls, all from the majority Sinhalese community.

Tigers are continuing a bush war against nearly 50,000 Indian troops in the island's North and East deployed under a July 1987 Indo-Sri Lanka peace pact which sought to end a bloody Tamil separatist campaign.

"The Indian military occupation, the continuing war, violence and anarchy are not appropriate conditions to conduct an electoral process," the statement released to Western news agencies here said.

It said Tigers had contacts with a representative of the main opposition candidate, Sirima Bandaranaike of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), to explain why they could not support her.

"Mrs. Bandaranaike and Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa of the ruling United National Party (UNP) have pledged to resolve the Tamil problem.

"But our people are well aware that both these parties have been instrumental in creating the ethnic conflict and have been responsible for the genocide of Tamils," the statement said.

It did not make any direct criticism of the leftist candidate, Ossie Abeygoonesekera of the Sri Lanka Mahajana (People's) Party, who is known to have had close contacts with the Tiger leadership.

Political analysts here say the two million Tamil minority block vote will be the deciding factor because the Sinhalese votes have been traditionally divided almost equally between the SLFP and the UNP.

The main Tamil political party, the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), has asked Tamils to support Mr. Abeygoonesekera, saying he was the only candidate who had worked for ethnic peace and unity.

A guerrilla group turned political party, the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), is fully backing the leftist candidate and is also providing him with bodyguards.